Ordered by Miss Wasney

Allowed for Reading 14 Days

MEMBERS' NAMES.	RECEIVED.	FORWARDED.
Rev. W. A. Wasney	Oct. 22	Nov. 4
Rev. R. Upton	Nov. 6	Nov. 20
Miss Roundell	— 20	Dec. 4
Rev. M. Barnard	Dec. 6	Dec. 20
Dr. Busfield	Dec. 20	Jan. 1.
[illegible]		
Rev. A. Lister	Jan. 8	Jan. 17
Mr. Coulthurst	Jan. 30	Jan. 30
Mrs. Coulthurst	Jan. 31	Feb. 14
Mr. W. Chippindale	Feb. 28	Mar. 5
Mr. Sidgwick	Mar. 5	19
Mr. J. Sidgwick	19	April 30
Miss Wasney	Oct. 9	Oct. 21

Rev. R. Upton, *Secretary for the Year.*

RULES.

I. The number of members not to exceed twelve, to be chosen unanimously; and each to pay to the secretary upon his admission two Guineas, and afterwards one Guinea by the first day of March in every year.

II. Each member to order books annually not exceeding two Guineas, nor less then thirty-five Shillings in value, and to transmit to the secretary, by the 17th day of March, the names of the books he fixes upon; but to have the option of ordering books to about half the amount only in March, and the remainder by the 17th day of the ensuing September. A fine of five Shillings to be paid for every omission.

III. Two members may order a book, or set of books, to the amount of their joint subscriptions.

IV. Each book or set of books of the price of two Guineas and under, shall be annually put up for sale by the secretary at half-price; and books above that value at two-thirds the price. The members, who ordered the books, to take them at those prices, if there be no bidder.

V. Every member of the society to be secretary in turn, either in person, or by proxy.

VI. Each member to read the books, he orders, first—to fix the time to be allowed for reading them, which in no case shall exceed a month, and to limit himself to that time. Two days to be allowed for forwarding the books.

VII. Every member to insert in each book, or in the first volume of each set, the day on which he receives, and the day on which he forwards it; and for every omission to pay a fine of Six-pence: and the fine for keeping books too long to be Six-pence per day, which may be ascertained by the dates.

VIII. The secretary to order the books by the 23d days of March and September, and to give directions to the bookseller, to whom he shall send them.

IX. Every member who shall not be present at the annual meeting, shall be fined ten Shillings and Six-pence, unless his excuse shall be approved of by the the members present.

X. The annual meeting for disposing of the books and settling the accounts, to be held the first Tuesday after the 20th of August.

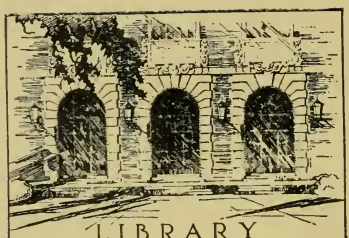
XI. No more than six days allowed for reading a Review, including the time for forwarding.

TASKER, PRINTER, SKIPTON.

MY GRANDMOTHER'S GUESTS

AND

THEIR TALES.



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MY GRANDMOTHER'S GUESTS

AND

THEIR TALES.

BY HENRY SLINGSBY.

"I should be, sir, the merriest here,
But that I have ne'er a story of my own
Worth telling at this time."

The Maid's Tragedy.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
JAMES ROBINS AND CO. IVY LANE, PATERNOSTER ROW;
AND JOSEPH ROBINS, JUN. AND CO. LOWER
ORMOND QUAY, DUBLIN.

1825.

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INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

Before I introduce my 'Grandmother and her Guests' to my readers I feel myself under an indispensable obligation to explain the accidents—for they were purely accidents—by which I became one of the party. I had spent the latter part of the year in the city of Paris, and, in the beginning of November, had set out on my way home, with the intention of passing a merry Christmas in merry England. I went from Paris to Havre-de-Grace, induced by the assurance which I had received from an old acquaintance that there were convenient, safe, and regular packets sailing every day thence to Southampton. I was tired of passing by Calais; I had been the same way so often, and I hated Calais and Dover so cordially, (who does not?) that I was the more glad to try the passage from Havre to Southampton. The result taught me,

by that process which makes a certain description of persons wise, that it is better to

> ——— 'bear those ills we have,
> Than fly to others which we know not of.'

If Calais is bad, Havre is worse ; and, although Dover is detestable, Southampton is—— But I anticipate.

I reached Havre in the middle of the day, and, having taken up my quarters at M. Prudhomme's hotel, I sauntered out for the purpose of inquiring about the packets. I found upon the quay, at a shed which was called an office, and was stuck over with bills printed in immense letters, and decorated with engravings of steam-packets nearly as large as the life, an intimation that "The Swiftsure, Captain Gull," sailed every morning at ten o'clock. I had no reason to doubt the veracity of the placard which announced this ; but, to make assurance double sure, I thought it would be prudent to make some inquiries of a stout ugly man, in the dress of a sailor, and with the manners and appearance of a stage-coachman, who seemed to be the director of the packet-office. I am not a very stanch disciple of the physiognomists, but I must own that I am influenced so much by appearances as often to conclude for or against a man's honesty by his "complement externe." When I first saw this packet-agent I thought he was a rogue—"and now I know it." I asked the amphibious monster

whether the steam-packet would sail on the following morning. He assured me that it would; that it never varied a moment in the time of its starting; that Captain Gull "never waited for nothing." A tall, thin, sallow-faced Frenchman, with large rings in his ears, whiskers like hearth-brooms, and a glazed hat, like nothing in Heaven or earth but itself, stood by and vouched for the truth of all that was said by the Englishman, who called monsieur his "pardner."

It was impossible not to believe what two such persons asserted with so much vehemence, and I quitted the quay in the expectation that on the following morning I was to embark for England. I passed the day as well as one does usually in places like Havre; that is to say, very listlessly and uncomfortably. I dined, and strolled, and looked at the ships, and saw the sun set, and returned to my hotel, sipped my coffee, read myself fast asleep with a French sentimental novel, and woke only to undress, that I might continue my slumbers. There was a coffee-room at M. Prudhomme's; and there were, I understood, some Englishmen in it; but I am shy of making acquaintances, particularly with my own countrymen. I once travelled with a *gentleman*, who had all the appearance of a soldier, as far as whiskers and a braided surtout, and a swaggering air and a loud voice, could go. He was called Monsieur Le Capitaine by all the waiters at

all the inns; and yet, to my horror and surprise, I saw this individual *captain* doing the honours of a linen-draper's shop in Fleet Street shortly after my return to England. I was once betrayed into the only spare seat in a diligence, all the others of which were occupied by the family of an opulent stock-broker; and found myself invested with the honorable, but not easy, office of Dragoman to the whole party. These and similar accidents have made me resolve never to know an Englishman abroad, and it was in pursuance of this resolution that I now kept my own room.

On the following morning I dispatched my breakfast with more than usual rapidity. As I like to be punctual, all my luggage was carefully embarked on the wheelbarrow of M. Le Commissionaire; and I was exchanging the parting civilities with the fat Madame Prudhomme as the *carillon* from the bell-tower in Havre announced that it wanted a quarter of an hour to ten o'clock. I proceeded leisurely to the quay in that comfortable tranquil mood which a man enjoys when he has before him the immediate prospect of regaining a home which he loves, and which a temporary absence has made still more dear to him.

I reached the quay, but saw no appearance of a steam-boat. Several persons were standing about, who were evidently waiting for the pur-

pose of embarking. The shed which was called an office was closely shut up; the marine monster, whom I had seen on the preceding day, was to be seen no more; and his thin partner seemed to have melted "into thin air." The placards remained on the wall, still asserting with dumb eloquence that the packet would sail at ten o'clock, although no packet was in sight, and although all the clocks in Havre were striking at once, and seeming to unite their forces to give the direct contradiction to these faithless posting-bills. Half an hour elapsed; still the agent was not to be found—still his French associate did not make his appearance—still no steamboat was to be seen, save the counterfeit resemblance which the black wood-cut on the wall presented. The people who were waiting grew angry, and talked loud; but this did not mend the matter. Every body was making inquiries which nobody could answer. At length I got very tired of the scene, and, vexed at my disappointment, I ordered the commissionaire back again to the hotel. There I learnt what I might have known before, if I had not been too lazy to inquire, that, of all the uncertain things in the world, nothing was so particularly uncertain as the coming or going of the Swiftsure.

It was impossible not to feel very much vexed, but it was wholly useless to express one's vexation; and, as the agent wisely kept out of the

way, there was nobody upon whom to vent one's ire. The morning passed away; and the hope which I still entertained of the speedy arrival of the boat prevented my resolving upon any other means of proceeding to England. At length the agent made his appearance, and pretended to have received intelligence that the Swiftsure had been prevented from sailing from Southampton by some accident, but he was sure she would arrive at night, and sail again the following morning. After the disappointment I had already experienced I did not rely greatly upon this promise, but I thought it would at least be worth while to wait until the evening.

At midnight the Swiftsure arrived. She had sailed from Southampton two days before; but, one of her wheels having broken, the passengers had the enjoyment of passing the whole of two nights on board, and would perhaps have remained there until this time but for the assistance of a small coasting vessel which perceived their distress, and, on coming up, was engaged by Captain Gull to tow his boat to Havre. I shall never forget the appearance which the Swiftsure's company exhibited on coming ashore: all the powers of description—at least all those I possess—would fail in the attempt to convey a notion of the wretchedness of the poor people who now landed, unwashed, ill, and famished, for there was little or nothing to eat on board. They all

swore solemnly and devoutly, as their feet touched the shore, that nothing in the world should ever again induce them to enter a steam-boat—a vow which, like those made by Catholic sailors in a storm, is, or is not, kept as circumstances may happen to influence the swearer.

The arrival of the boat did not improve my prospect a jot; it was impossible for her to sail again within any reasonable period, because the necessary repairs would occupy several days—perhaps weeks. The skipper of the little coaster, which had brought in the Swiftsure, thought this was an excellent opportunity for him to make some money; so he announced immediately that "the fast-sailing and spacious packet (so he called his dirty little vessel), the Blue-Eyed Maid, would sail for Southampton at six o'clock on the following morning." He promised to carry his passengers across in less time than the steam-boat performed the voyage, and had the modesty only to charge half as much more for the fare. In a moment of desperation I agreed with him—so strong was my desire to reach England. I had no particular reason for this anxiety; but it is a feeling common, I believe, to all men, that, the nearer one approaches home, the stronger becomes its power of attraction; and the difficulties must be great indeed which prevent a man from completing a journey once begun, when its end is his home.

On the following morning I embarked on board the Blue-Eyed Maid ; and the little captain, true to his word, set sail at the hour he had promised. I found a company on board small in numbers, but still too large with reference to the capacity of the Blue-Eyed Maid. They had all, I suppose, been induced, as well as myself, though probably for more forcible reasons, to encounter the inconveniences of sailing in so small a vessel, by the hope of reaching England sooner than in any other conveyance. Among these persons there was only one whom I had the honour of knowing. It was Mr. Tims, a very honest, innocent, disagreeable person, who, as he now did me the favour to inform me, had lately, for the first time in his life, broken the chain which had bound him to London, and visited foreign parts.

Tims, without having a single vice that I was able to discover in the not very long nor intimate acquaintance I had with him, but, on the contrary, being always ready to do kind things for every body, was the most thorough-paced cockney, in all the force of that phrase, that I ever met with. His natural goodness of heart led him to look on the most favorable side of every thing; but he had such a sentimental twist, and was so given to prosing, that, with the best wishes in the world for his welfare, you could not help adding one that he might enjoy

all his felicity in some place where you could never again set eyes on him.

His person was tall and awkward, his face reasonably ugly and blanket-coloured, his dress at once precise and slovenly, his cravat as large as a table-cloth, and tied on bandage-fashion, looking as if it was intended not for the decoration but the protection of his person, and arranged rather by the hands of his surgeon than his valet. He was, notwithstanding, considered, in the city, as a genteel person; and had a great talent (and to him a very useful one) of making some people believe, by the formality of his manners and the solemn length of his stories, that he had brains in his head.

Tims was of, what the fourth-rate blue stockings would call, a "literary turn." I have even heard that he once wrote poetry, but I am unwilling to believe any thing so injurious to his character, until I shall have better authority for it. Of his love (the ancients called it by another name "more *Scottish* and less nice") for scribbling, I was, however, now destined to endure a sufficient proof. His large leaden eye dilated when he saw me; and, by the unusual alacrity of his manner, I am inclined to believe that he was, as he said, very glad to see me. After the first greetings were over, I saw that his bosom labored with some mighty burden, of which he wanted to deliver himself. I thought he had

been smuggling, and that his uneasy postures and constrained manner were owing to the stuffing of contraband goods with which he had lined his outward habiliments. He looked at me as suspiciously as if I had been a custom-house officer; and I began to fear that he was meditating some proposal to me to fill my boots with gloves, or to put a lace veil into my cravat; or to wear, by way of under waistcoat, some yards of French silk; all of which I had resolved peremptorily to decline. I am no friend to smuggling; and, as I have a great objection to being handled by custom-house officers, I always take care, by not carrying a scrap of smuggled goods, to be in a condition to knock down without the least ceremony the first of that fraternity who puts a finger upon me; a practice which I particularly recommend to all my friends. You can punish this sort of vermin in no way so severely as by not attempting to smuggle, and in no way so justly as by beating them without mercy.

But Tims was no smuggler; the throes which distended his bosom proceeded not from contraband goods, but from the struggle between a consciousness of his merit and the modesty of his temper. He wanted, as I soon learned, to tell me that he had written an account of his travels; but not, he said, with a view of publishing them. No; the public was capricious, the critics in-

solent and unfeeling; and, although he was ardently devoted to intellectual pursuits, he had no intention to make literature his profession. He had written a short account in the shape of letters to his wife—Mrs. Tims—a charming woman, to whom he should have great pleasure in introducing me, and so forth.

I began to shudder at the exordium; but as he proceeded I felt the fit increase, and my consternation was at its height when Tims proposed to read his journal to me. What could I do? He was one of the best men in the world, although he was one of the greatest bores. I thought that I might at least let him begin, and trust to some fortunate accident for an interruption which should relieve me. I signified my assent with as much composure as I could assume, and calmly resigned myself to my fate.

"Do you know I have only been away a month?" said Tims.

"Indeed!" I replied.

"Yes, upon my honour, it's a fact," rejoined Tims, in great delight at my supposed surprise; "and I think you will say, when you hear all I have seen, that I have not let the grass grow under my feet."

I could not help ejaculating mentally "I wish the grass were now growing under your feet, or even over your grave, in some pleasant churchyard a hundred miles hence." But my doom was

fixed. Tims produced from his pocket a neat little book, bound in red morocco, with gilt leaves, in which he had written, in a round schoolmaster-like hand, the account of his "Travels in the Netherlands." Sentiment was Tims's *forte*, and his powers of description he believed to be of a superior order. If any body doubts that he was right, I wish them to read the first passage of his "Travels," which is as follows:—

"Started from the Custom-House Stairs at a quarter past nine, A. M. with a cloudless sky, portending fine weather. A bright sun spread his warm and joyous beams around. The rains of the previous day had cleared the atmosphere, and the whole heavens shone propitiously upon us. I had no sooner stepped on the Talbot's deck than the restlessness of change from one element to another ceased: the business of embarking, with all its anxious preparations, was at an end, and I seemed by the transition to be at once absolved from every *earthly* trouble." "You see the pun in the last line," said Tims; "I think it is rather happy, eh?"

I bowed assent.

"I like," he continued, "to give an air of lightness, a sort of jocund freshness, to my descriptions, by the introduction of such little sallies."

But the tender parts of Tims's travels were to my thinking the most delightful, or, to use his own phrase, the most "strikingly interesting."

I select the following instance from among many of a similar description; and I should like to see any thing at once equally touching and sportive with this.

Tired of the monotony of sitting on deck, Tims says, "I began to reconnoitre the packet, and first of all went to the lower regions of the 'smoky devil.' (It was not often that Tims went such lengths.) Ah, my dearest Nell, how this brought to my fond memory thy prattling tongue! and various were the incidents now concurring to confirm the words—('If you have tears, prepare to shed them now!')—thou hast so often and so correctly sung—

> "Oh! what a row, what a rumpus, and a rioting,
> All those endure, you may be sure, who go to sea!"

Tims's description of the steam-engine is vivid, but a little wild: I think he was frightened, for he says the "men were like devils, and the fires like Mount Etna." Poor Tims! I believe he had about as correct a notion of his infernal majesty as of the Sicilian volcano. He returned quickly to the deck; and here occurs a passage which I think one of the happiest in his little volume, and such as could not be paralleled by any thing in Sterne's so often praised "Sentimental Journey."

"I hastened back to a safer element, and sought, between 'the waters above and the waters below,' some one of my own species to

smooth my passage over the dread deep. Upon whom should my searching eye fix itself but Mr. Wiggins, of Pentonville! Time and distance were now happily beguiled. We met as if we had appeared after a joyful resurrection * * * *. How delightful is companionship! how it softens the asperities of a rough journeying through life, and shortens and sweetens the way! The mind, occupied in social converse, loses the taste of those imaginary bitters, and the mind's eye those unwelcome frowns, which fear and suspicion too often produce."

Wiggins's astonishment at seeing the moon rise is told in exquisite style. "At this period," says Tims, "the grand luminary of night arose majestically out of the bed of the ocean. My friend, Mr. Wiggins, who suffered no object to pass his scrutiny, was so struck with its novel appearance as eagerly to inquire its nature and end. He first held it to be a beacon to guide poor mariners on their dubious course; but, as she spread her full red face, intersected with streaks of broken and fleeting clouds, he *conjured* this light of our way into a '*ship on fire*,' to our no small wondering amusement." He must have been a nice man, this same Wiggins, to travel with! but, of all things in the world, I should never have taken him for a *conjurer*. The description of the moon's red-streaked face is not less new than happy.

So far I had endured Tims's travels with tolerable equanimity ; but at length a chance, which I can hardly regret, compelled me to break off. He had chronicled, among other things, the effect which the motion of a ship at sea usually produces upon persons not accustomed to it, and had recorded the most minute details of his indisposition. " I felt symptoms, &c." he said, " and accordingly lashed myself to the railing of the deck, secured my head with a nightcap and my hat by a handkerchief, tucked my cloak round my legs, and philosophically dis———." But no ! I must not abuse the good nature of my readers in Tims's fashion. It is enough to say, so lively was his account of this scene, that, although an old sailor, it produced a very unpleasant effect upon me, and I quitted him abruptly. He made some attempts to renew his *lecture*, but I excused myself.

A slight breeze had brought us out of the port of Havre, but in about an hour it died away to almost nothing, and we made little way. Noon, evening, came on ; the sun set, and still Havre was in sight. The complaints against the wind were loud and frequent ; and prayers that a breeze would spring up not less so. As the night advanced these wishes were complied with to the letter : a breeze did sprung up, which soon increased to a hard gale ; but, unfortunately for us, it blew from the north-east. The sea soon

became rough enough to alarm every body on board; and when the captain told them, without ceremony, that with such a wind it would be impossible to make Southampton, the murmurs of the passengers now increased to downright abuse. In bad French, and worse English, they attacked the captain; and he, although so used to hard words and hard weather as not to mind either of them too much, could not endure this mixture of noise. He got quite out of temper. "Where are we going then, if we are not going to Southampton, captain?" said a fat old man, who had the appearance of a butcher retired from trade, and who, with his wife and daughter, had been making what he called a *tower* on the Continent;—"where are we going?"

"To Davy Jones, for aught I know, if this 'ere wind blows as I expect it will," replied the captain. "But come, now," he added, finding that any milder method of persuasion had no effect upon his noisy passengers, "I'll tell you how the matter stands. We have as good a chance of being foundered in a dark night and a heavy sea like this as any body would desire. There's only two men and a boy beside myself to work the vessel, and that it's impossible to do while you stand about me making all this noise. Now if the women don't go below, and if the men don't sit or lie down on deck, and hold

their tongues, why you may all sink together, for I'll be —— if I move a hand!" This appeal had the desired effect; the captain's hearers were all too much frightened, and knew too well how entirely they lay at his mercy, to offer any objection. The ladies hastened into the small cabin, and the men put themselves out of the way as well as they could. The wind continued to blow with unabated violence; but the ship, though small, being taught, and well built for the rough and dangerous channel in which we were sailing, there was little real danger.

The captain, when he had got rid of his importunate and unreasonable passengers, recovered his good temper, and, in answer to my questions, told me we were proceeding rapidly towards the coast of Devonshire; and that, although it was impossible to reach Southampton, he had little doubt that we should be able to land on the following day.

I was not sorry to hear this; because, even though I should run the risk of being thought a coward, I must confess that the prospect of being drowned at sea is not one which I could contemplate with any satisfaction. I know that death will come when it will come, and that it is idle to make faces at it; but, for my own individual taste, I should prefer to meet it any where but at sea. The night of which I am now speaking was one in which it would be as dis-

agreeable to drown as any I ever beheld. The sky was not dark, but black; pitchy—almost palpable—darkness covered us all about. The only light I could see was from the curling tops of the billows as they were lashed by the loud wind, and the blazing sheets of flame which the ship's keel threw off on each side as she ploughed the uneven sea. The dashing of the waves, the hoarse angry voice of the storm, were alone to be heard, and were, indeed, so loud, as to preclude the possibility of any other sounds from being audible. My imagination, excited by the terror and darkness which reigned around me, increased even the actual horror of the scene. As the wind blew with loud boisterous roar over our heads, and screamed and whistled through the cordage and masts—for not an inch of canvass was spread—I could have fancied that it was like the wild chase in Bürger's ballad; and that the screams and sobs of the victim were heard occasionally through the hoarse yelling and barking of the pursuers. The ship kept on her way; and, irregular and uncertain as it was, still she proceeded with great rapidity. The morning at length broke upon the night of horror which we had passed; and, as soon as it was sufficiently light to discern objects, the captain told me that we were, as he had thought we should be, off the coast of Devonshire. As the sun rose, the violence of the wind gradually decreased; and

when, soon afterwards, the little town of Sidmouth was in sight, the captain said he could safely land us there.

The passengers now came upon deck; and, when they learnt that they were to go on shore at a distance of one hundred and sixty miles from London, instead of about seventy-five as they had expected, their complaints were renewed; and, as they found there was no immediate danger of drowning, they abused the captain with all the force and variety of which their rhetoric was capable. After the night he had passed their angry reproaches were to his ears as mild as the whispers of evening zephyrs, and he seemed to care just as much for them. I looked about for Tims, intending to suggest to him that this night's adventure would make a glorious finish to his journal—but he was not to be found. I saw something red, which was jammed into the space between the mast and the water-cask on the deck; and, upon drawing it out, I found it was Tims's journal. I now, for the first time, became alarmed respecting him. I asked the captain; but he could tell me nothing about him. I had every part of the vessel searched, but in vain. We were obliged to adopt the conviction that poor Tims had been carried overboard, and that the noise of the storm had prevented us from hearing his cries. I looked upon his journal now with very different feelings; and, as it was

the last memorial of the ill-fated traveller, I carefully dried it, that I might have the melancholy satisfaction of returning it to his disconsolate widow;—a task which I have since performed.

At about noon we reached Sidmouth, and were put ashore to my infinite content. I was not sorry, now that the danger was over, for the chance which had conducted me into this part of the country, because my grandmother lived in the village of Woodville, only five miles distant from Sidmouth; and I had thus an opportunity, of which I was glad to avail myself, of paying a long-promised visit. I put myself, therefore, with as little delay as possible, into a chaise, and, as the clock struck five, I was entering the avenue which led to my grandmother's house.

I found that "My Grandmother and her Guests" had just sate down to dinner, and, exercising the freedom which the nearness of my connexion authorized, I entered the dining-parlour without hesitation; and, after greeting the old lady, took my seat in a company, all of whom I knew, and with whom the reader shall be acquainted anon. While I ate my soup I explained, in few words, the chances which had driven me to Woodville. The suddenness of my arrival did not cause my welcome to be less warm: my grandmother congratulated me on my escape, and in making the number of her guests an even one. She hated

to see an odd number at her table. For my own part I enjoyed the quiet and comfort of my present quarters in proportion to the contrast which they presented to the inconvenience and danger in the midst of which I had passed the night; and announced my intention of spending this day and the following at Woodville, after which I resolved to proceed to town.

CHAPTER II.

My grandmother, gentle reader—for I think it high time that you should know something about her—was, at the period of which I speak, just entering her seventieth year. She was of a commanding figure; and the effect which time had produced upon her person was rather to give it a venerable air than to characterize it by any of those marks of feebleness which are common to old age. Her face had possessed considerable beauty; and her features were of that regular description, that, even at the advanced period of life to which she had attained, they were, and are, extremely agreeable. She had been for many years a widow; and the necessity of superintending the education and establishment of her children, which, at her husband's death, devolved upon her, had drawn out the powers of her mind, and given to it a character of more than usual energy. She was very fond of society, particularly that of young people; and, for very natural reasons, preferred that of the younger members of her own family to any

other. On the present occasion she had several of them among her guests, and the others were old and valued friends. In describing them I shall begin with the former; and, in the first place, with Elizabeth Mowbray.

She was the only child of the old lady's favorite daughter, who had died in India, and was her grandmother's constant companion. She was just eighteen years of age; her figure was of the most perfect symmetry; and the finished beauty of her face was rendered still more remarkable by the frankness and the girlish simplicity which characterized it. I never yet saw a human countenance in which there was so much of perfect innocence mixed up with so much real beauty. She had been carefully educated by my grandmother; and from this circumstance, or perhaps from that hereditary resemblance which sometimes prevails in the minds as well as in the features of persons of the same blood, she was very much like the old lady in the qualities of her temper and intellect. The freshness and vivacity natural to her youth made of course a striking difference between them, but it was the only one that I could ever discover.

My uncle Hugh was my grandmother's eldest son. He had served for more than five-and-twenty years in the navy, from which he had at length retired; and, having attained the rank of post-captain, had taken up his abode with his mother, to enjoy during the remainder of his life

such repose as the gout and his numerous wounds would allow him. He was as much of a mere seaman as I ever knew. From early childhood he had been attached to his profession, and the dangers and trouble which he had undergone in it only served to endear it to him the more. He had been so long in the habit of contemplating it as the only thing in the world worth the notice of a rational man, that his thoughts and words had all imbibed a marine flavour. Every thing he said or did "suffered a sea-change;" and, ready as he was upon all occasions to defer to my grandmother, and to obey her requests, she could not succeed in prevailing upon him to discard his nautical phrases. When, after repeated trials, she was convinced of the utter impracticability of her attempts to reform her son's "cacology," she gave them up, and he was allowed to indulge, as far as he pleased, in that which had become more familiar to him than his mother tongue, with no other interruption than a little occasional quizzing from Elizabeth, who delighted in making him try to explain the meaning of some of his expressions. I say *try* to explain; for, such is the *inexplicabilis vis* of nautical phraseology, that any attempt to render its meaning, by words in ordinary use, would be wholly ineffectual. Notwithstanding his odd *façon de parler*, he was as good-hearted and as brave an Englishman as ever stepped a quarter-

deck. He had distinguished himself upon many occasions when hard fighting was in request, and had been wounded so often that he used to say he did not think there was a single beam in his hulk of the same material that he had been launched with. He knew nothing of the world, although he had coasted the whole habitable globe; and, if he had been compelled to mingle with general society, he would have been as much at a loss as a South-sea islander. No man was ever so easily imposed upon, or so entirely simple in every thing not connected with his own profession.

Harry Beville stood in the same degree of relationship to my grandmother as Elizabeth and myself. He was the eldest son of a daughter of my grandmother's. His father was an eminent and opulent merchant; and Harry, having begun his education at Harrow, and finished it at Trinity College, Cambridge, was now pursuing the profession of the law. It would, perhaps, be more germain to the matter to say that he was supposed to be pursuing it; for, like all other law students who are not impelled to apply themselves by some real and urgent necessity, his connexion with the law was merely nominal. His father's wealth, and the amount of his own allowance, precluded Harry from feeling any such necessity; and, his taste leading him to very different pursuits, he followed them without hesita-

tion. Still, however, he lived in chambers; and, to keep up appearances, he had several shelves filled with law books, with no part of which, excepting the titles, had he the slightest acquaintance. He made his appearance in hall just often enough to keep his terms; but he was never rash enough to taste the tough meat, and bad wine, which are provided there for the purpose of qualifying men to fill the highest legal offices. He was the pupil of an eminent special pleader, who was supposed to monopolize all the learning in that particular branch of science to which he had devoted himself; and who took only eighteen pupils;—a remarkable instance of moderation, when it is considered that this number was more than six times as many as his chamber could accommodate! Harry Beville was one

> Among the blest, the chosen few,
> (Blest if their happiness they knew,)*
> Who for three hundred guineas paid
> To this great master of the trade,
> Had at his rooms, by *special* favour,
> His leave to use their best endeavor,
> By drawing pleas, from nine till four,
> To earn him twice three hundred more;
> And, after dinner, might repair
> To *'foresaid* rooms, and *then*, and *there*,
> Had *foresaid* leave, from five till ten,
> To draw th' *aforesaid* pleas again.

Harry was soon disgusted with this calling; and not less so with the eminent pleader who

* *Sua si bona nórint.* VIRG.

taught it. He found that what was dignified with the name of science was mere chicanery; and that the master of it was a pedant and a sot, whose only merit (if merit it be) was, that he understood the juggling he professed in all its most minute ramifications. The course of his own studies had so much refined his taste and enlarged his mind, that he could not condescend to the drudgery and nonsense of the pursuit to which he was invited, and he therefore left the great special pleader to console himself as well as he might for the loss of his pupil; a matter not so difficult, since he left with him also the fee, with which, by a legal fiction, that learned pundit was supposed to be remunerated for the wisdom he communicated to his scholars.

In compliance with the wishes of his father, who thought that every man should have some definite occupation in society, Harry continued to live in chambers, and intended, in the fulness of time, to be called to the bar, although he had shaken hands with the law as a profession for ever.

Upon his return from a hasty tour, which he had made through Italy and part of Germany, he saw Elizabeth for the first time since she had reached womanhood. He was at once captivated by her charms, and proposed to pay his addresses to her, which, after reasonable hesitation, was granted with the consent of my grandmother.

Harry was now in the height of his wooing, and the lapse of a few months was to unite him to Elizabeth for ever.

The persons I have described were such of my own family as composed My Grandmother's Guests on this occasion, with the addition of myself. I have not any thing to say of the latter individual which I think it worth while to trouble the reader with. I do not know much good, and I cannot be expected to say much evil, of him: I will therefore let him pass, and proceed to the other guests.

Mr. Evelyn was the curate of the parish, and discharged its duties in the place of the Rev. Dr. Doublechin, who had found that the air of Woodville did not agree with him, and had therefore gone back to Cambridge to enjoy its pure air, and to follow the temperate habits which the heads of houses are known to practise. The parishioners of Woodville had every reason to rejoice in this decision of the reverend doctor. The simplicity of Mr. Evelyn's manners, the piety of his life, and the useful and unostentatious way in which he discharged his holy function, made every body revere and love him. Although the stipend which Dr. Doublechin paid him for discharging the whole duty of the living amounted to no more than one-tenth of that which he himself received for doing nothing, it was enough for all the curate's wants. The

necessaries of life at Woodville were always plentiful and cheap, and Mr. Evelyn's wishes did not stray far beyond them. His income enabled him to assist the poverty of some of his needy parishioners; and to add, by occasional purchases, to his library—the only luxury in which he indulged. He was my grandmother's prime minister upon all important occasions; his advice was usually adopted, and his assistance required to put in execution all those charitable labours in which the old lady spent so much of her time and her money.

The apothecary of the village was another of my grandmother's council upon all such occasions, and her guest at present. Mr. Burton was a thin sickly gentleman, who looked more like a patient than a medical man; but he was a very good and useful member of the little community in which he lived, and enjoyed a large share of my grandmother's esteem.

The only person remaining undescribed was Marmaduke Wharton, gentleman, and an attorney of his majesty's Court of King's Bench. He managed my grandmother's property, received her rents, let her farms, and, conducted all the other necessary operations with skill, diligence, and punctuality. He was a perfect jewel of an attorney for honesty and dispatch; but he was in every other respect a great oddity. He had an unconquerable passion for local antiqui-

ties : the vestiges of a supposed Roman camp, a Runic inscription on an old stone, pieces of rusty armour, or even less worthy discoveries of the spoils of antiquity, were objects of as fervent adoration to him as the relics of martyrs to the devotees of the Romish church. He would spend whole days in visiting places which were believed to have been the scene of some feat of olden times. Mr. Burton, who was glad of an opportunity of returning some of the jokes which the attorney was fond of letting off at him, used to say that he was like one of the Seven Sleepers, or like Rip Van Winkle in Geoffry Crayon's story ; and that, after having lain for many years entranced, he busied himself, on his awakening, to find out the spots which had formerly been familiar to him. I never knew a keener antiquary than Mr. Wharton ; a tolerably plausible story of a monument, or an inscription, would, at any time, induce him to make a day's journey in the hope of being able to decipher it ; and, acute as he was in the ordinary business of life, he was very easily deceived when once his love for antiquities was aroused. His library was a very singular one : it contained a numerous, and, as far as their pecuniary worth alone was considered, a very valuable collection of books. The rarest county histories, the earliest editions of the works of celebrated antiquaries, the chronicles and other

fabulous histories of England, were spread in rich profusion over his shelves. His books were collected as some old ladies collect china—not because it is beautiful or useful, but because it is rare and old. Modern literature he despised, or, at least, disregarded; and I have no doubt, if it were fairly put to him, he would confess that old Stow, and Anthony à Wood, and Thomas Hearne, were, in his estimation, greater men than Chaucer, Shakspeare, and Pope. His very figure was of other times; his dress of a fashion that had been long past; and his whole appearance very much like that of a well-preserved antiquity. Such, gentle readers, were My Grandmother and her Guests.

The old lady was a great lover of story-telling. She had a large collection of the best novels and romances, as well of ancient as of modern times, and was excellently acquainted with the whole history of fiction. My earliest recollection furnishes me with nothing so delightful as her stories; and in many a time of doubt my conduct has been influenced by some precept, some axiomatic truth, which was hidden in the unpresuming tales with which she has fed my childish ears.

After dinner we adjourned to her drawing-room, which was as little like a modern drawing-room as any thing you can imagine. It was a

lofty chamber, wainscoted with oak, which time had made black, and the labours of the stout-armed housemaids had caused to shine with a very reasonable polish. The portrait of my grandfather, in a suit of flowered velvet, with a coal-black peruke, and holding in his hand a scroll, purporting to be a turnpike act, by carrying which in parliament he had gained himself a deathless reputation, hung over the fire-place. Another, representing my grandmother, in the dress of a shepherdess, with a crook in one hand, and the other resting gently on the head of a lamb, while her own head was bent over her shoulder with a truly Arcadian languish, hung at the opposite side of the room. Two antique sofas broke the uniformity of the heavy but comfortable arm-chairs which were ranged about the room; and a massy cabinet, elaborately carved, and exemplifying the notions which were entertained of fine taste in furniture a century and a half ago, held my grandmother's books. A blazing fire diffused light and heat throughout this old-fashioned chamber, and gave it a feeling of comfort and enjoyment which I have vainly tried to find in more magnificent apartments.

In this room we assembled; and, the duties of the tea-table having been discharged with all possible excellence and gracefulness by Elizabeth, (for my grandmother, among her other fright-

ful old-fashioned ways, chose to have the tea always made in her presence,) the old lady claimed our attention.

"As every body knows my fondness for hearing stories," said my grandmother, "I shall not attempt any apology for the proposal I am about to make to you. It is, that each of us in turn shall tell a tale. I know there are none of you present who will feel it difficult to do this; and, unless I am very much mistaken, we shall find it as agreeable a method of passing the time as any that can be devised. But, first, let me ask if any one has a better proposal to make."

"You used to be fond of whist, madam," I said, although I knew the old lady never played, excepting when she was, as it were, dragooned into it; but I should have been glad to negative the proposal, which I feared would fall very heavily on me when it should be my turn to comply with it.

"You mistake, indeed," said my grandmother; "I never play at whist, nor at any other game of cards, but to please my neighbour, poor old Mrs. Dunny, who is too deaf to listen to my stories."

"If she were dumb too," said the attorney, "instead of its being, as it would in every other person, an infirmity, it would appear a virtue in her. There is no old woman within twenty miles who propagates more scandal than Mrs. Dunny.

If she can't hear stories, she can tell them : they are not so amusing nor so harmless as yours, madam; and, in point of veracity, the 'History of the Seven Champions of Christendom' is a grave history compared with them."

"Come, come, Mr. Wharton, you must not say such things of poor Mrs. Dunny," cried my grandmother, "or we shall think she is not the only person who spreads scandal. I won't hear any thing said against her in her absence; nor will I even consent that the 'History of the Seven Champions,' for which I have a profound respect, shall be praised at her expense. You must not say that behind her back which you would not repeat to her face."

"Why," replied the attorney, "I might do that very safely; for, unless I had one of the captain's ship-trumpets, she could not hear me. But, since you will have it so, Mrs. Dunny shall be a model of truth and good nature."

"But all this," said my grandmother, "is not an answer to my proposal, but an interruption which that good-for-nothing Henry Slingsby has created for some sinister end of his own. Silence," she said, shaking her finger authoritatively at me, as I was going to protest my innocence—"I know your tricks of old." This I felt was very true; so I thought it best to bow to her answer, and to hold my tongue.

"Is my proposal agreed to, then?" asked the old lady again. "Nobody objects, and therefore I presume every body is content."

"Then we shall have a sort of 'Decameron' in little," said Harry Beville. "What a pity that there are not just ten of us, and that we are not all going to stay here ten days! Oh, if there was but a plague raging in England!"

"I know no greater plague at this moment than yourself, Harry," said my grandmother, "for reminding us of the 'Decameron.' The recollection of that immortal collection — that masterpiece of human wit and ingenuity, which defies, as it ever has defied, all attempts at imitation—fills me with despair. I declare I am afraid now to say another word in favour of my project."

"Since when is it, sir," said Elizabeth, with a provoking gravity, "that you graduated in the ancient and honorable society of Dampers?"

"Really," said Harry, "I beg pardon with the greatest humility: I did not imagine that a simple allusion to Boccaccio—an allusion, too, which, as it seems to me, was perfectly natural—could have had the effect which you attribute to it. I as little thought that it could have frightened my grandmother, as that she or you, or I, or any body here, could think of imitating the great master of modern tales. Not but that I repeat we might make a little 'Decameron' of our

own ; I mean a sort of private ' Decameron,' not one which shall go down to posterity, but simply to serve for our own amusement."

" Well, say nothing more of your mischievous *contre tems*, Harry," said my grandmother ; " but let us proceed."

" Permit me, my dear madam, for one moment to attempt to set myself right with you. I do think you are unnecessarily wroth with me. It is true that we are deficient in many things to complete our resemblance to the party of Florentine ladies and gentlemen. In the first place there is the plague ;—that I confess we have not, nor is it very probable in this salubrious air of Devonshire that we are likely to be accommodated with it ; but then, surely, this is a deficiency which we can make up our minds to bear. For the rest, we must try to supply by the force of imagination whatever is wanting in reality. We have not the *palagio* in which Messer Giovanni establishes his story-tellers ; but then we have a snug old English country-house, which, at this season of the year, is, to my particular taste, infinitely preferable. I will not make any comparison between the company of which I have the honour to make one, and that of the ' Decameron :' first, because I am one of it ; and, secondly, because I had not the good fortune to know Signora Pampinea and Signor Dioneo, and the rest of them ; but I cannot help observing that there is

one manifest advantage on our side;—we are here, and they are no more. Then the place in which our stories are to be told is, it is true, somewhat different, but not therefore to be despised. We do not sit in a pleasant shady meadow, where the sun's beams cannot enter, and where a gentle fresh wind blows; nor can we sit down upon the grass; but your drawing-room, my good grandmother, is better than all the meadows in Arcadia for this weather; your blazing fire an excellent substitute for the sun; and your sofa a better seat than the grass. We do not hear the 'shrill cicala' among the olive-trees; but we hear the chirp of the cricket on the hearth. As far, therefore, as the mere accessaries are concerned, I think we are as well off as the party whom the plague drove from Florence. The resemblance, in other respects, is, perhaps, more close. A proposal has been made by you that each shall tell a tale in turn; and every body is willing *di dire una sua novelletta*. So far, at least—and I did not mean to carry it any farther—I have made out the resemblance; and I hope I have freed myself from the censure which you were, I think, somewhat hasty in passing upon me."

"I was only shocked, my dear Harry," replied my grandmother, "that you should think of comparing our humble efforts with the immortal tales of Boccaccio."

"But no such madness ever entered my head,

I assure you," replied Harry. "To convince you, however, my dear madam, that I bear your reproof in good part, I will now propose that you shall be crowned queen of the evening, and that the story-telling shall proceed under your direction."

"By no means," said my grandmother; "we will have no royal authority on this occasion; ours shall be a republic, and the common voice shall in all cases decide. I will not assume an authority which I might find burdensome to execute."

"How, then, shall we begin?" asked Harry.

"By the decree of Destiny," said my grandmother: "we will draw lots, and the order in which we are to proceed shall be regulated by the numbers which fall to us."

The old lady then prepared papers of equal size, on each of which a number was written; and, having folded them up, they were deposited in her work-box, which was cleared out for the occasion. Mr. Burton then handed them about to each person present; and, the choice having been made, the papers were opened.

Number one had fallen to the share of Mr. Wharton, and my grandmother called upon him to fulfil the conditions without delay.

The old gentleman began to utter all those ordinary excuses which are made by persons under similar circumstances. He declared he

knew no stories; he had no taste for such subjects; his reading had never been sufficiently among works of imagination——

"I think, sir," said Harry Beville, interrupting him, "you showed me a curious copy of the 'History of Matthew Paris,' the other day."

"Yes," said Mr. Wharton, "you may well say a curious copy: there are not three such in the kingdom."

"And pray in what class of writers do you rank him?"

"In that of historians, certainly," said the attorney, with great gravity.

"Then, instead of the story which we have a right to exact from you, I think I may venture to offer, in the name of the company, to let you off for one of the histories, as you call them, of Matthew Paris. If they be histories, I would never wish to read romances any more."

"Well, then," said the attorney, "since needs must be, I shall endeavor to comply with the rule which has been laid down; but without going so far back as Matthew Paris, whom, notwithstanding your sneer, Mr. Beville, I still hold to be the prince of British historians."

"He shall be every thing you like to call him if you will but begin," replied Harry.

"Attend, then," said the old gentleman, "to a story which, although it is not of so remote an antiquity, is not less true than the relations con-

tained in the *Historia Major* of the renowned Monk of St. Albans."

"A solemn intimation, indeed!" cried Harry; "then we must believe it whether it seems feasible or no."

The attorney, without deigning to notice this sceptical insinuation, composed himself in his chair, and began the following tale.

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SIR ROGER DE CALVERLEY'S GHOST.

The Lawyer's Tale.

Your fairy, which you say is a harmless fairy, has done little better than played the Jack with us.

——— This thing of darkness
I acknowledge mine. THE TEMPEST.

SIR ROGER DE CALVERLEY'S GHOST.

THE little village of Calverley, about six miles from the town of Leeds, is one of the most beautiful and picturesque that can be found in the west riding of Yorkshire. The whole of the riding may, indeed, challenge competition, for the richness and variety of its scenery, with any place of similar extent in the kingdom; and, among the many charming spots which it contains, Calverley is entitled to the pre-eminence. The road from Leeds to this village is pretty, even now; but, at the time to which this tale relates, it was infinitely more so. Calverley Wood, which the necessities of subsequent proprietors have reduced to very modest dimensions, extended in the seventeenth century for nearly four miles towards the town of Leeds. The river Aire ran through a part of it, and bounded its extremity, where a large wooden bridge was thrown over it.

There is not a child (not to say an old woman) in the neighborhood but knows—and, if you should doubt the fact, will swear—that this wood is haunted by the ghost of Sir Roger de Calverley,* who was pressed to death in the reign of Edward IV. in consequence of his refusing to plead to an indictment against him for murdering two of his children. Some of what lawyers call the "ancient people" have even seen the ghost with their own proper eyes, and all the inhabitants know somebody who has seen it. The story goes, besides, that the hours of the spectre's appearance are between twelve and one o'clock at midnight; and that he will leap behind the traveller as he passes through the wood, and ride on the horse's crupper to the next running stream.

That the ghost did once appear, and act in the odd manner here imputed to him, cannot be doubted; because the facts, as they are detailed in the following history, are as true as any story that ever was told.

The whole of the domain on which the village of Calverley now stands, and the wood just mentioned, as well as a noble mansion called Calverley House, the very ruins of which have dis-

* In order to prevent mistakes, I feel it necessary to assure the reader that this Sir Roger de Calverley and the 'Spectator's' venerable friend are of totally different families, notwithstanding the similarity of their names. The attorney, who at first had some doubts upon the subject, told me he had taken great pains to ascertain the fact.

appeared, were in the beginning of the civil wars the property of the Vavasour family. Soon after the commencement of the troubles Sir Ralph Vavasour died, and left the honours and the estates of his ancient house to be supported by his only son.

Sir Edward Vavasour was of a temper wholly unfitted for the times in which it was his lot to live. He had availed himself of all the advantages which his rank and fortune afforded him; and, after being carefully educated at home, had passed several years in France with his maternal relations, who were of one of the first families in that country. His mind was highly cultivated, and all his habits were of that polished and refined kind which can only be acquired by a residence in courts, and the society of enlightened and noble persons. On his return to England he was soon acknowledged to be among the chief ornaments of the British nobility. The king distinguished him by his favour; and the winning suavity of the youthful baronet's manners, added to his accomplishments and personal advantages, made him an universal favorite with the inhabitants of the court.

He had married, shortly before his father's death, the Lady Margaret Butler, a distant relation of the Earl of Newcastle; and this union cemented that intimate friendship which a con-

geniality of taste had already formed between Sir Edward and that gallant nobleman.

The state of the times obliged him to retire to Yorkshire, as well to take possession of his paternal estates as to repress by his presence some of the disorders which were beginning to manifest themselves. The influence which a landlord then possessed over his tenantry could not be loosened by any very sudden process, because it was the consequence of numerous and almost paternal kindnesses on the part of the superior, which the inferiors duly appreciated; and it was then no less the desire than it must always be the interest of both parties to support each other. Owing to this feeling on the part of his tenants, the district in which Sir Edward resided was comparatively tranquil; and he remained at Calverley for some years, a quiet, but not an indifferent, spectator of the events which took place, and without finding any occasion to take an active part in the contest, which raged around without reaching him.

The pernicious contagion of example did, at length, however, reach Calverley; and Sir Edward saw with great pain that he had no alternative but to take up arms against the parliamentary power, whose object (however just might be the pretences on which they had set out) now seemed to be the establishment of a tyranny at least as

hateful as that of the worst kings. Sir Edward was full of that true and fervent courage which springs from a perfect rectitude of principle and reason, but he was nevertheless reluctant to become a soldier. After the description which has been given of his character, it will be seen that fear (a sensation to which, indeed, he was a total stranger) had no share in causing this disinclination; but it was induced because he felt he could be more usefully, if not more honorably, employed than in making war, and because nothing but the most stern and unyielding necessity could justify the shedding of blood in such a cause as that which now divided the kingdom, and had broken asunder the most holy and kindly bonds of humanity and of society. Driven, however, to adopt a course which he regretted, he was no sooner convinced that it was at once imperative and inevitable than he proceeded to enter upon it with the utmost alacrity. He raised a troop of his own tenantry, and, taking an affectionate leave of his mother, of his beautiful young wife, and of two lovely children, who had been added to crown his matrimonial felicity, he placed himself at the head of his retainers, and joined the standard of his friend, who was now the Marquis of Newcastle.

His activity and skill were of the greatest service to the royal cause, and had the effect of exposing him in proportion to the hatred of the

opposite faction. Military rank was offered to him repeatedly, and was as often refused without the least hesitation. His reply to the king himself, and to his friend the marquis, was always the same. He had joined the army because he felt it was his duty to support the state, which he saw in danger. The post of a mere volunteer afforded him as good an opportunity of discharging this duty as he could look for in a much higher rank, and he felt that a simple command was most consistent with his character as a country gentleman. There were, besides, a sufficient number of aspirants for promotion; and he might, perhaps, have thought that his openly declining to increase the number would teach some of them to moderate their pretensions: but, although he had no other command than that of captain of his own company, his achievements had been of such a nature as to attract the attention of the enemy no less than of his own party. In the northern counties of England his name was well known; and, great as was the reputation of the Marquis of Newcastle's forces, he was confessed on all hands to be one of its chief ornaments.

Up to the period of the battle of Marston Moor the cause of the king seemed in a prosperous condition. The event of that conflict, however, gave a blow to the royal interests which they never afterwards recovered. Prince Rupert

not only insisted upon giving the enemy battle, contrary to the opinion and advice of the Marquis of Newcastle ; but he persisted in so ungracious a manner, and so entirely took the command out of the hands of the marquis, that, even if the issue had been less disastrous than it was, the latter nobleman never could again have endured to bear arms in a cause which should place him under the orders of the rash German prince.

It is not necessary to detail the course of that unlucky fight, which, after seeming to incline in favour of either side, at length terminated in the total defeat of the king's troops. It is well known that, notwithstanding the discontent for which the Marquis of Newcastle had so much cause, he, and the force under his command, signalized themselves by deeds of the most determined valour ; that they bore the whole weight of the enemy's attack ; that they more than once turned the tide of the battle ; and that, if they had been allowed to follow up the advantages which they had gained, the defeat of the parliamentary forces would have been certain and signal. The rashness of Prince Rupert led him into an absurd pursuit of one division of the enemy ; while his envy of the marquis's superior abilities forbade his surrendering to him any part of the direction of the battle. The consequence was that the close of the day found the much larger part of the king's troops irretrievably beaten ; and

Prince Rupert then retreated with his horse, and such of the infantry as chose to follow him, within the walls of the city of York. The dead bodies of the Marquis of Newcastle's regiments marked the position which they had taken up in the beginning of the fight, and from which death in its most overwhelming shape had not been able to force them.

The Marquis of Newcastle, his staff, and a few of his officers, who, being well mounted, were able to accompany him, retreated also to York when the face of the fight had become so desperate that to stay any longer was wholly unavailing. Sir Edward Vavasour fell early in the action; the most painful search was made for his body on the following day, by the orders of the Marquis of Newcastle, but in vain. A few days afterwards some of his servants were sent by his mother, who had influence enough to obtain permission of the parliamentary commander for this purpose; but their endeavours to discover their master amidst the disgfiured slain were equally fruitless.

Besides the mischief, which a discomfiture like the loss of such a fight as this must always occasion to the cause of the party upon which it falls, the secession of the Marquis of Newcastle was no less injurious to the king. The marquis, very soon after the battle, expressed his intention of quitting a country, which, he said, he was convinced he could not save, but which he still

loved too well to witness its falling a prey to the ruin which must necessarily ensue. He withdrew with the small number of his adherents who remained; and, escorted by a single troop of horse, he went to Scarborough, where he embarked on board a ship of his own, and sailed for Hamburgh.

The affliction of the family at Calverley may be better imagined than described at the news of the defeat at Marston Moor, and the death of Sir Edward. All the ordinary forms of mourning were adopted; search was made, as we have already said, for the body of the baronet; and this proving unsuccessful, the old Lady Vavasour, who was a woman of uncommon energy, and whose conduct had secured for her the respect even of such of her neighbours as had espoused the opposite party, procured, without much difficulty, permission for herself, her daughter-in-law, the children, and her servants, to repair to Hull, where she had engaged a vessel to carry her to France, her native country.

It now becomes necessary to impart a secret, which, if the Roundheads had been acquainted with, would have thwarted the dowager lady's plans, and somewhat have frustrated the events of this history. Sir Edward Vavasour was not dead. It is true that he had fallen at Marston; and it is no less true that nothing would have induced him to quit the field alive, if he had been in a situation to act for himself.

At the moment, however, that he fell, a gentleman who was devotedly attached to him, and who had always an unlucky habit of interfering in the concerns of other people, happened to be close by him. This was Sir William D'Avenant, who, from having been, in the 'piping times of peace,' merely an idle courtier and poet, had now become a soldier of some renown; and, being an adherent and retainer of the marquis, he was intrusted with a nominally important command, which somebody else executed for him. He loved Sir Edward with the warmest and most disinterested affection; they were sworn brothers: in their less busy times they had capped verses at court, and once clubbed a masque at a royal entertainment. The knight's duty ought to have kept him in York on that day: but his busy propensities led him to Marston Moor; and, when there, his inclination induced him to fight near Sir Edward Vavasour.

Sir William's courage was of a companionable quality; he could never fight until some one would set him the example: by himself, he said, he felt like one line in a couplet, in want of another to rhyme with. He confessed he was so indolent, that, upon some occasions, he would rather be kicked than fight single-handed; yet, such was the sociability of his temper, that, side by side with a real fighting man, he would lay on like one of the Knights of the Round Table. He had been

mauling all the parliamentarians who came within his reach with true poetical fervour, bestowing along with each blow some quaint imprecation or odd nickname upon his adversary, to the great amusement of the soldiers near him, with all of whom he was a great favorite. Not one of the rogues that he smote but he had a jest or a sarcasm for; and he had been cracking skulls and jokes until his strength and his wit were considerably impaired. The conviction that the day was decidedly going against his party came at the same moment that he found himself making a short blow and a bad pun. At this instant, too, he saw his friend Sir Edward go down from a blow dealt to him by a rawboned butcher of Tadcaster, who was a captain in the parliamentary army.

"Knave!" he cried, as he spurred his horse against this ruffian, "thou shalt no more shed the blood of man nor of beast!" and, rising in his stirrups, he cleft the savage giant's head nearly asunder, and brought him down to the ground. "Thus," he continued, "do I revenge my friend, and many a score of honest sheep and oxen."

At this moment a vigorous charge drove back the enemy; and Sir William, whose courage, now that his friend was not able to back it with his example, began to flag, and, like Acres', to "ooze out at his fingers' ends," thought it was an admirable opportunity to return to York, and to

carry the prostrate Sir Edward with him, where his wounds might be tended, if indeed (which he very much doubted) medical skill could avail them.

With the assistance of an old soldier, of whose life this was the last kind action, (for a random shot from a Roundhead blacksmith's petronel sent him soon afterwards into the kingdom of the ghosts,) he placed Sir Edward, now nearly insensible, before him on his horse, and set off at a round pace towards York. He soon found, however, that it was hopeless to attempt to reach the city, for a party of the enemy's horse lay before him. To his still greater mortification he saw that he was observed by them: turning, therefore, his horse's head round, he spurred without sparing, and fairly fled away, not knowing nor caring whither, so that he might distance them.

In this he succeeded, for the foes were at that moment much too busily employed to think of pursuing him very far. He proved on this occasion the truth of his favorite saying, that his greatest talent consisted in running away; and, after half an hour's riding, he had completely distanced the soldiers who endeavored to take him, and had blown his horse. Night was now drawing in: he alighted from the charger, and, loosening his girths, he asked Sir Edward what he thought it would be the best to do.

The baronet was too much exhausted with the pain of his wounds and the loss of blood to answer at any length; but he contrived to express his opinion, that, if by any means they could reach Calverley, it would be better to do so, since all hopes of returning to York were cut off.

"Zounds!" cried the knight, "that's easier talked of than done, my dear Sir Edward. Poor Hamlet, here, whom I so named in honour of my godfather, Shakspeare, and because his black hide looks in as deep mourning as the Danish prince's suit of sables, is blowing like a smith's forge. What sayest thou, lad?" he continued, apostrophizing the steed, and patting his neck, "canst thou carry us a dozen miles before supper-time? Thoult try, I warrant."

He walked by the horse's side for some time, until the animal had pretty well recovered his wind; and, then mounting him again, they proceeded at a sharp pace by a cross road, which Sir Edward was able to describe to his companion, in the direction of Calverley.

Within about five miles of Calverley Sir William perceived a man before him, mounted on a stout gelding. To accost him he knew was dangerous; but to pass him without doing so might engender suspicions, which could scarcely be less injurious in his present condition. He therefore boldly rode up, and civilly saluted him.

"Whither goest thou, friend?" asked the stranger, in the snuffling tone adopted by the Puritans of that day.

Sir William found that the stranger, though not drunk, was what is courteously called "rather disguised in liquor:" he also knew instantly of what description of person he must be, and that he had every thing to fear from him if he should discover who he was. He therefore replied that he was a clothier going to Leeds, and that his companion, who rode before him, had been thrown from his own horse, and was so much hurt that he could not keep his saddle without assistance.

"Art thou a friend to the cause?" asked the stranger.

"With all my heart," replied Sir William; although he was quite sure that the stranger spoke of a very different cause from that to which he meant his own equivocal answer to reply.

"Thou hast a passport from Sir Edward Fairfax, then, to travel this road?" said the stranger.

"I have," replied Sir William, to whom a round lie never cost an effort; and who, as far as his invention could stretch, was never without a passport.

"I have authority to inspect it," said the stranger; "and, when we come nigh unto the house of reception, called by the ungodly the

Fighting Cocks, about a mile hence, thou shalt produce it before me, that mine eyes may see the truth of thy ways."

"Willingly," said Sir William; "but I prithee, sir, tell me who it is that this dark night has brought me acquainted with."

"I am Ananias Fats," replied the other, "an unworthy servant of the Lord: I minister the word of the Most High, and fight his battles with the arm of flesh when need is, seeing that I am, besides, a captain of Hewson's regiment."

"We must cut his throat," whispered Sir William to his companion. "Art thou that holy man," he added aloud, and with a conventicle twang—"art thou he, whose pious exhortations do arouse the lost people, and whose speech stirs up their sleeping zeal, even as the trumpet rouseth the war-horse?"

"Yea, verily, I am that unworthy vessel," replied Brother Fats.

"And how do thy labours prosper?" asked Sir William in a similar tone. "Do the people of this land hearken unto thy council, and give ear to thy pious inspirations?"

"Deaf! deaf!" replied the other, who thought he had fallen in with one of his own stamp. "Were it not that the arm of flesh is strong, and that I can smite those who will not be persuaded, this place would be little better than a howling wilderness. Lo! there are many who

do shut up their ears and close their understandings against the council of my lips."

"Ignorant and deluded people! But they are of the baser and more brutish class, I must believe."

"Not always, for there is a stiff-necked generation even among those who have horses and chariots, and whose treasuries are filled with silver and brass."

"Alas! alas! who are such blind and deaf wretches? who are they that, like the adder, are deaf to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely?"

"There be many such, my brother; and, among others, there is the malignant Lady Vavasour." Here Sir Edward made an impatient movement, which D'Avenant repressed. "I am now," continued the Puritan, "on my road, to try once more if I can open her eyes to the sinfulness of her ways, and prevail upon her to bring back to his duty her wilful son, who has taken up arms for the man whom he calls king."

"Here's a crop-eared villain!" whispered D'Avenant. "But how," he pursued aloud, "do you gain admission to her ladyship?"

"The Parliament's arms are too strong to brook denial, and I have their authority for what I do; so that, albeit her ladyship loveth not the holy ones, I do, nevertheless, purpose to sojourn beneath her roof for many days. It is, as I have

been told by Brother Goggle, a goodly dwelling; and the cook is a man cunning in his art, and much skilled in the science of the flesh-pots of Egypt. I shall tarry there, for it is the duty of the saints to feed upon the substance of the unrighteous."

While the communicative Ananias, under the influence of certain potations of ale, was telling his new acquaintance what he meant to do, the latter held a short colloquy in whispers with the baronet. The result of their conference was very soon put into practice. Sir William pulled up his horse, and alighted under the pretence that he had cast a shoe. Ananias checked his beast also; and, before he had time to say a word, he found himself unhorsed and prostrate, with his false friend's knee on his breast, and his pistol at his throat.

"If you speak or stir, you Roundhead villain," cried Sir William, "this moment is your last. Now, where is the commission you told me of?"

Ananias was one of those amiable men who are never fond of fighting, although they often talk of it; and he was not so drunk but that he knew two men against one were odds, particularly when the one man is on the broad of his back, with a loaded pistol only half an inch from his throat.

"Spare my life, gentle cavalier," said the prostrate Puritan. "Let me live, and you shall have all I possess."

"If you had as many lives as are in Plutarch

I would not spare one of them, unless, in the first place, you give me the commission," repeated Sir William. "Where is it, thou wicked Ananias?"

"In my saddle-bags," replied Ananias.

"Clap them on our horse, Sir Edward," said the knight to his companion, who, notwithstanding his weakness, had alighted, and now immediately transferred the bags to Hamlet's back.

"And now," said Sir William to the Puritan, "if I should spare thy forfeit life, and give thee another chance with the old one to save thy soul, wilt thou take thyself away from this neighborhood? for I swear to thee, upon the word of one that hates all Puritans as much as he hates the great devil, who is the father of them and thee, that, if thou art found within thirty miles of this place for the next month, I will spoil thy exhortations for ever. Dost thou promise to obey?"

"Yea, verily, I do, perforce."

"And without any of those cozening double-meaning reservations for which thy brotherhood have become so famous?"

"So thou wilt spare my life, I promise," said the elder.

"Why, then, I think I will spare thee, not for any love of thee, but because I hate the blood of all thy race so much that I would not even let it out when I can avoid it. But give me thy

sword," he said, as he loosened the sword-belt of the elder, and handed the weapon to Sir Edward; "and I think, too," he added, "I will have thee change clothes with me."

He loosed his grasp a little, and helped the Roundhead to rise, but still kept his pistol near enough to make an impression on him.

"Now, then," he said, "unfrock, and speedily! 'It is a naughty night to swim in,' but thou must strip. Be quick, Ananias; thou wert never before honored with such a *valet de chambre.* Come, thy cloak and band, and the rest of the sheep's clothing in which thou dost ensconce thy wolf's body. Come quickly!" and he added a blow with the flat side of his sword, to quicken the tardy operations of the elder, who, with many wry faces and great reluctance, did his bidding.

Sir William then transferred his pistol to Sir Edward, with a particular request that, if the Puritan evinced the least symptoms of treachery or refractoriness, he would be so obliging as to shoot him through the head without hesitation or ceremony.

Sir Edward promised; and the knight stripped off his own uniform with great dispatch, making Ananias put it on, while he assumed his garb.

When the exchange was completed, Sir William pinioned Ananias's arms, and helped him upon his horse; after which he tied his legs very effectually beneath the animal's belly.

He then went to the road-side, and, cutting up a stout thistle, he carefully tied it under the tail of the elder's steed.

"There!" he said, "Ananias; as I have prevented thee from smiting thy charger's sides with thy spurs, I have provided for thy rapid journey by putting a goad to his tail; and, as the beast looks to have mettle, I warrant that he will not shortly slacken his pace."

As he finished speaking he gave the horse a smart blow, at which he set off in a gallop; and the incessant motion of the thistle, which at every bound struck against his flanks, soon increased his pace, to the terror of Ananias, who went off like Mazeppa on his wild horse.

> "Away! away! and on they dash—
> Torrents less rapid, and less rash."

The elder's journey was not very long: the horse, maddened by the constant stinging in his rear, kept on with unabated speed until he reached a *vidette* of the parliamentary army, placed about ten miles short of York. The horse, attracted by the light of the soldiers' fire, bounded towards it: the guards, seeing a man in the royal uniform riding up to them, betook themselves to their arms; and, before Ananias, who was breathless with fright, could make himself understood, he was shot through the head by a particular friend and townsman of his own, Tribulation Holdfast, who had quitted his trade

of a cobbler to become a corporal in Cromwell's regiment. Ananias and he had been companions in wickedness from their boyhood upward, and had both taken to the thriving trade of hypocrisy just at that time when every body who knew them predicted that the gallows must be their inevitable fate. They had both been poachers and deer-stealers: Tribulation had a habit of squinting, and was always reckoned a crack shot by night, or at other improper and unseasonable times; but his skill was never advantageous to the rest of the world, excepting on this occasion. When he examined, by the fire-light, the face of his prey, he was astonished to find his old friend Ananias, and still more so to see him bound hand and foot, and in the uniform of the Marquis of Newcastle's regiment. He was, however, sure that there was a mistake in some quarter or other; and, to put an end to any needless inquiries, which might turn out unpleasantly for himself, he, with the assistance of his comrades, dug a hasty grave, in which the carcass and the memory of Ananias Fats were buried together.

Sir William D'Avenant knew nothing—and, if he had, he would have cared as little—about the rogue he had thus sent headlong to meet his fate. Sir Edward—who, faint and exhausted as he was, had not been able to refrain from laughter at the manner in which D'Avenant had stripped

the Puritan, and then dismissed him—now asked his friend what he purposed doing.

"I do intend, with your honour's permission," he replied, "to present myself at Calverley Hall in the venerable character of Ananias Fats. It would be something dangerous, as well to the good ladies there as to our own insignificant throats, to appear in our proper persons at this juncture: I propose, therefore, to go first, and sound the place; after which I will return to you, and effect your entry. Do you approve of this?"

"Do as you will—your ingenuity and discretion are the best qualities in the world to rely upon in danger; and, just now, I am really so much exhausted that I am wholly incapable of any exertion."

"No matter, gentle cavalier; I will personate this zealous brother so to the life, that, if you could see me, you would be fain to cry out, with Falstaff's hostess, 'Oh rare! he doth it as like one of these harlotry players as I ever see.'

I believe," he continued, as they rode onwards, "that I was born under an acting planet: the theatre seems to be my destiny; and, unless these pestilent Puritans should succeed in rooting out, as they threaten to do, the drama from this nation, I believe I shall take up with poetry and the stage at last. All this comes of having a dramatist for my godfather: if any other than

gentle Will Shakspeare had held me over the font, I might have escaped so beggarly a lot; but, hang Care! I would not exchange such a sponsor for a better—even if the world ever saw a better, which I doubt."

They now approached Calverley Hall, and, by Sir Edward's directions, rode through the park to a small summer-house, which stood at the end of the garden. Here the poet assisted his friend to alight; and, having bestowed him safely upon a couch, he turned his horse into the carriage road, and trotted up at a smart pace to the great entrance. After rapping for some time with the butt-end of his pistol at the door, he heard steps proceeding along the spacious hall; and soon afterwards a small wicket in the door was opened, and he saw the white head of old Gervase, the butler, peeping through it.

"How now? who knocks here at this time o'night?" was asked from within.

"Verily, one of the brethren, who seeketh to commune with the Lady Vavasour," replied the knight, in the tone of the character he had assumed.

"Then, my brother, you must come to-morrow," replied the servant with an ill-tempered scorn, which raised him highly in Sir William's opinion. "My lady sees neither brother nor sister to-night."

"Man, thou art uncivil," said Sir William;

"I have General Fairfax's commission to enter this dwelling."

"This is not General Fairfax's house, but my master's, Sir Edward Vavasour; and, unless you have his commission, you enter not here." A good deal of grumbling about "crop-eared canting thieves" followed, which was not quite distinct.

"Do you then resist? and must I use force?"

"You must do just as you like, only I tell you that I have a firelock here; and Ralph, the gardener, has gotten another, which he'll fire from the other side of the house when he hears mine; and, this pitch dark night, we can neither of us tell one o' the brethren, as you call yourself, from a housebreaker; so, unless thy hide be bullet-proof, 'ware making any disturbance here."

Sir William heard the old fellow winding up the lock of his piece; and, when he had finished, the iron-shod butt of it rung upon the stone floor of the hall. He began to think that his masquerading might turn out seriously, so he alighted, and approached the door.

"Gervase," he said, in a lower tone, and in his natural way of speaking, "if you love your master, open instantly. I am alone—you have nought to fear."

"Body o' me, though," cried the old butler, to whom the voice was familiar, "that cannot be one of the brethren! Let us look at thy

face, man;" and he held his candle up to the wicket.

"Lord love your honour, I know you by your nose," cried Gervase, as he hastened to undo the heavy fastenings of the door, and to admit Sir William.

In a few words the knight explained to him the necessity there was for keeping Sir Edward's arrival secret, lest, as he feared, after the defeat at Marston, the whole country should fall into the hands of the parliamentarians, and in that case his life would be hardly safe. For this purpose he told the butler that he intended to keep up the character of the Puritan whose clothes he wore; and that, with the exception of himself and the ladies, he wished no one in the house to know him but as Brother Ananias Fats. He then bade him accompany him to the little pavilion, whence they carried Sir Edward into the house unperceived, most of the servants being at this time in bed. Sir William, after having seen Hamlet safely stabled, desired to be announced to the ladies.

Their anxiety to know the result of a battle, in which Sir Edward was certain to be engaged, had prevented them from retiring to rest; and, although it was now near midnight, and of course long past the hour at which even ladies of quality in those times sought their pillows, the Ladies Vavasour were still up. The dowager

lady was employed in working at a tapestry frame, in which she was assisted by a pretty black-eyed girl, an attendant, somewhat above the degree of a servant. The Lady Margaret had been reading aloud the Countess of Pembroke's 'Arcadia,' and was just arriving at the termination of the tragic story of Argalus and Parthenia.

The progress towards a perfection of style, which our language has made since the period when this delightful romance was written, prevents us in a great measure from relishing the quaintness of its expressions; but, in spite of this disadvantage, it would be impossible to deny to it as a whole, and to this episode in particular, the possession of very powerful pathos.

The Lady Vavasour had read the account of the death of Argalus, and the sequel, showing how the poor heart-stricken Parthenia, carried by her grief beyond the bounds of reason and the customs of her sex, had put on the armour of a warrior, and, calling herself the Knight of the Tomb, defied, in this disguise, the gallant Amphialus, by whose hand her lover had fallen. Her taunts and insults provoked Amphialus, who would willingly have spared her, to inflict a mortal wound upon her neck; when, upon alighting to see the face of his unknown and discourteous antagonist, he discovered, to his grief and horror, that she was a woman.

"The head-piece was no sooner off, but that

there fell about the shoulders of the overcome knight the treasure of faire golden haire, which, with the face (soone known by the badge of excellency), witnessed that it was Parthenia, the unfortunately vertuous wife of Argalus; her beauty then, even in despight of the passed sorrow or comming death, assuring all beholders that it was nothing short of perfection. For her exceeding faire eyes having, with continuall weeping, gotten a little rednes about them; her roundy sweetly-swelling lips a little trembling, as though they kisst their neighbour Death; in her cheeks the whitenesse, striving by little and little to get upon the rosinesse of them; her neck (a neck, indeed, of alabaster) displaying the wound, which, with most dainty bloud, laboured to drown his own beauties; so, as here was a river of purest red, there an iland of perfittest white, each giving lustre to the other, with the sweet countenance (God knows) full of an unaffected languishing. Though these things to a grossly conceiving sense might seem disgracious, yet, indeed, were they but apparelling beauty in a new fashion, which (all looking upon through the spectacles of pity) did even increase the lines of her natural fairnesse; so as Amphialus was astonished with grief, compassion, and shame, detesting his fortune, that made him unfortunate in victory."

This tale had excited abundance of tears from

the two ladies, whose anxiety for Sir Edward's fate made them full of sympathy for the fabled woes of the personages of the romance ; while the black-eyed Dorothy—whose heart had yet experienced so few sorrows of its own that her tears were always ready to start for those of others, either real or imaginary—wept until she could hardly see her needle.

This melancholy party was disturbed by the entrance of Gervase, who announced Master Ananias Fats, to the astonishment and displeasure of the ladies. They could not conceive what had induced the butler to depart from the ceremonious respect with which he usually approached them, and more particularly in favour of a man bearing such a name.

There was, however, no time to chide, for Ananias entered close upon Gervase's heel, and, with the insolent awkwardness which distinguished the Puritans of the time, he advanced towards the old lady, keeping his hat on, and saluting her in no other way than with a long drawling sigh, partaking somewhat of the mixed nature of a groan and a snuffle.

The old lady drew herself up with all the dignity she could command; and, if looks had the power to slay, hers would have pierced the pseudo Ananias through and through.

Sir William, however, looked at her without changing the affected gravity of his countenance.

"Sister," he said, "if thou art she whom men call the Lady Vavasour, I would speak with thee."

"I am the dowager Lady Vavasour."

"Hum! Dismiss the maiden."

"I can have no conversation with thee which she as well as all the rest of my household may not hear."

"Sister, be not obstinate;—again I say unto thee, dismiss the maiden."

"I have no other reply to make to your insolence but to request you will speedily do your errand, (unwelcome, whatever it may be,) and that you relieve me from this intrusion."

"Sister, thou art—a woman." He added, in a lower tone, "*Il faut qu'elle nous quitte; les nouvelles dont je suis chargés ne sont que pour vous et Madame.*"

The old lady was more astonished than ever at hearing the Puritan speak in French. She saw immediately that there must be some mystery; and now she could account for the abruptness of the entrance of Gervase, who, she did not doubt, was acquainted with it. She therefore told Dorothy, whose large black eyes were rolling about in utter astonishment, to retire.

As soon as the girl was gone Sir William untied the string of his high-crowned hat, and, his hair falling about his shoulders, he appeared in his own shape—that of an old and valued acquaintance. He related the fatal event of the

fight at Marston; the destruction of the Marquis of Newcastle's regiments; the ill fortune of Sir Edward; and shortly touched upon the manner of his escape. This recital, short as it was, was interrupted by the anxious inquiries of the tender and affectionate Lady Margaret, who, when she learnt that her husband was in the house, insisted on being led to him instantly. Sir William moderated her impatience as well as he could; he assured her that Sir Edward was in no danger, although his wounds would render him incapable of any exertion for several days to come: but that which had the most weight with her was his representation of the peril to which her husband's life might be exposed if it should be known that he was at Calverley. A council was held as to the best place of lodging the wounded baronet at once safely and commodiously. It was soon decided that he should occupy two small chambers which formed part of a suite of rooms, and from which a secret staircase led into a little pavilion in the garden: this staircase was seldom opened, and known only to the old servants; and the entrance to the rooms with which it was connected, being in the wainscot, might be easily concealed by a couch, or any other piece of furniture. The preparations were soon made, and before morning Sir Edward was safely installed in his new quarters, and under the care of his fond wife and mother. Here he lived for nearly

a month: he was able to take exercise at night in the grounds and in the adjoining wood, and the days were passed in the most agreeable manner. His wounds, which their numbers alone rendered formidable, were nearly well; and he now began to think what steps should be taken for the future. To stay in England seemed useless to the king's cause, and dangerous not only to himself, but to those who were far dearer to him than himself. The example the Marquis of Newcastle had set him of quitting the kingdom, which, if he had been alone, he would not have followed, now seemed the best course for him to pursue, and to this the persuasions of his mother and his wife also strongly inclined him. The dissensions, and, as it sometimes appeared to him, the devoted follies of the royal party, were hardly less disgusting than the falsehood and villainy of the parliament. At length he resolved to adopt this measure. The news of his death had long been received at Calverley, and was universally believed by all but those who were in the secret. The servants had been all put into mourning, and preparations made for the departure of the ladies and the children to France. Permission was obtained without much difficulty, because the prospect of so fat a sequestration as the estate at Calverley was too enticing to permit the members of the council to throw any obstacle in the way of it.

Sir William D'Avenant liked so well the cha-

racter of the Puritan that he continued to keep it up, and he had even the audacity to travel to Hull under the name of Fats, notwithstanding the possibility which he believed might exist of his meeting the real owner of that dignified appellation. Our readers know that such a possibility was, to say the least, a very remote one; but Sir William, who was not so sure of that fact, had resolved, in case he should meet him, to outface the brother; and he did not doubt that, after a whole fortnight's practice, he should be enabled to beat him even at his own weapons.

He went to Hull for the purpose of engaging a vessel to carry the Lady Vavasour and her household to France, and had the good fortune to light upon an honest fellow, who commanded a smuggling lugger, and who hated the parliament so much that it was with difficulty D'Avenant could get him to treat with a person of his appearance. Having, however, invited him to the inn at which he lodged, he made so favorable an impression upon the skipper as to overcome all his scruples, although he did it at the expense of a head-ache, the consequence of keeping the seaman in countenance while he discussed a huge can of a composition, that he called *rumbo*, and which he mixed with his own hand. By the time they were at the bottom of their beverage, the skipper, drunk as he was, was satisfied that D'Avenant was no more a Puritan than himself, and he promised to

hold himself ready for sea as soon as he should receive orders. Gamblers and smugglers and thieves are all honorable men, and scrupulously observant of their promises when it suits their interest to be so: of such men it may be truly said that their words are better than their bonds; and as, in this instance, Master Roger Blurt could get nothing by breaking his engagement, he stood to it like a stout fellow.

Upon Sir William's return to Calverley the preparations for the removal were set about with the greatest diligence; and, in the course of a very few days, the chief part of what was intended to be taken away was carried down to Hull. The other arrangements were also completed, and it was settled that at the close of the day the ladies should depart in a carriage, under the escort of old Gervase and another servant, and accompanied by Brother Ananias, who had condescendingly promised to see them embark.

A livery suit had been provided for Sir Edward exactly like that of the servant who was to attend the carriage with Gervase; and it had been settled that he should make the first part of the journey in the carriage, and that the party should not set out until late in the day, in order to shun observation. They were to cross the bridge at the end of Calverley Wood, and then to take a road by which they should avoid the town of Leeds, where the greatest, or rather the only,

danger awaited them. After travelling all night, the servant, a trusty lad, the son of one of Sir Edward's tenants, was to be dismissed, and the baronet to take his character and his place. Relays had been provided on the road, and the whole journey was to be made without stopping any longer than might be wholly unavoidable.

No plan could have been more cleverly arranged; but it is the fate of all human plans to be subject to accidents, which traverse and baffle them. As poor Burns sung,

> "The best-laid schemes o' mice and men
> Gang aft a-gley;"

and those of the junto at Calverley were not exempt from this common lot.

On the day fixed for the departure they were sitting after dinner, and the conversation had taken a melancholy tone, which was probably occasioned by their being about to quit a spot around which all their best affections were entwined: the prospect, too, of going to another and a foreign country, perhaps for ever, under all the disadvantages of exile, and exposed to innumerable privations so hard to bear by persons who had, until this time, lived in almost unlimited opulence, was not very cheering. If it had not been for the charm (oftentimes deceitful, but, even at the worst, still a charm) which Hope throws about the human heart in its saddest moods, the sorrow of the inmates of Calverley would have been

greater; but they thought of their return, and this mitigated their regret at being compelled to depart.

Sir William D'Avenant, whose cheerfulness and vivacity were never to be subdued, drew a glowing picture of the delight with which they would greet Calverley when a short residence abroad had made them duly appreciate its beauties, which he said they were far from doing at present.—Then he talked of France, whither they were going; he described the gaiety and brilliancy of the French court, until he even made the gentle Lady Margaret think it might be as well to see it. He spoke to the old lady of the stately dignity and decorous etiquette which prevailed there—of the respect with which the aristocracy was treated by the people—until she believed that, if she could come back when she liked, she should have pleasure in visiting again a country which she had not seen since her childhood, and which was the native land of her ancestors. He praised the chivalrous and gallant spirit of the youth of France, and talked of the superior refinement and grace which pervaded the higher orders of the nation, until the baronet was persuaded that it was better to live in France, until quiet should be restored to England, than to stay losing his time and his labour in fighting the Roundheads. Sir William had even made Dorothy, who was sitting in a bay window, think that there was nothing so dreadful in

going to France, when Gervase entered with a look of considerable alarm, and put an end to his harangue.

"Away, away, your honour, to your hiding-place! Here's a troop of the cursed Club men coming up the avenue, and God knows what may be their purpose."

In a moment the baronet retired to his chamber: the entrance was carefully closed, and the party had resumed their places, when the leader of the party, whom Gervase had descried, entered the room in which they were sitting.

This man was well known to the Lady Vavasour, and to all the household. He was by trade a miller, and lived at a short distance from Leeds. In his youth he had been one of the most troublesome blackguards that the county could produce; the terror of the quiet people of his own rank, and universally hated. He had been often whipped and imprisoned, and once narrowly escaped hanging; for which good luck he was indebted to the late Sir Ralph, who took pity of his tender years. Having reached the age of forty, he on a sudden became marvellously pious, and, by a consequence then quite in the usual course, he also became a resolute rebel. The habits of his former life, perhaps, led him to join the Club men rather than the regularly organized forces of the parliament. They had more of a bucaniering commission; and, unless they were belied, they did

not care which side they plundered, so that they did but plunder.

The qualifications of Sampson Ryder could not be overlooked in such a society; he soon procured a command, and was the dread of the whole county. The inhabitants of Calverley had long expected to suffer from his attacks; but he had kept aloof from them in a very singular manner, and had, on all occasions, shown an inclination to be as civil as the brutality of his nature would allow of. Rascal as he was, he could not but remember that the late Sir Ralph's intercession alone had saved him from the gallows: the old baronet had, besides, been a kind and considerate landlord to Sampson and his father, and he could not quite bring his mind to the commission of any outrage on the Calverley family. His coming on the present occasion was not of his own choice, but in consequence of an order from Fairfax, who had sent him to see the house cleared, and had given him, besides, particular directions to take care that no persons should accompany the ladies but such as had already received permission. This injunction was rather the result of that jealous policy which the general always pursued than of any suspicion that the suite of the Calverley family would contain any of the royalist fugitives; and of the existence of Sir Edward he had not the most distant notion. Ryder had also been directed to leave a guard at the hall,

and to place the rest of his men at a barrier called Bradford Gate, about a quarter of a mile from the side of the bridge nearest to Calverley. This barrier had been strengthened in order to prevent any hostile approach, of which Fairfax said he had received some intimation.

Sampson Ryder, upon his entrance, made a bow, in which his mingled arrogance and awkwardness were displayed in a very amusing manner. He then advanced to the old lady, and, with an air which partook of trembling as well as swaggering, he told her that part of his errand which related to her own departure. The good old lady made no reply; but, thinking that at this critical moment the example of those Catholics who offer a candle to a certain black gentleman, not enrolled among the saints of the calendar, might be advantageously followed, she ordered refreshments to be provided for Master Ryder, and withdrew, leaving him in the hands of the Reverend Ananias Fats.

The supposed Puritan immediately began to engage the leader of the Club men in conversation, for the purpose as well of gaining time as to enable him to find out the character of the man, in order to turn it to some account. The latter was, however, no such easy matter; he found that his companion was as stupid and as hard-headed a ruffian as ever was employed to do mischief: he listened to the canting harangue with which

Sir William, in his assumed character, regaled him, but neither seemed to understand nor to care for it, busying himself in the mean time with long and frequent draughts out of a blackjack well filled with ale, and cutting enormous slices from a piece of cold beef which stood beside it. He, however, found leisure in the mean time to explain to the supposed elder, at greater length than he had communicated to the lady, the exact tenour of his order from Fairfax.

Sir William was greatly perplexed at this untoward event, which, as it seemed, must necessarily overturn all the plans they had formed for Sir Edward's escape, and would even place him in great danger of falling into the hands of the enemy. The time was fast approaching at which the departure of the ladies and their suite was to take place; and the person of Sir Edward was so well known to Ryder, and perhaps to many of his troop, that it would be madness to think that any such disguise as they were furnished with could effectually conceal him. There was not a moment to lose, and Sir William was absolutely at his wits' end for a scheme to rescue his friend from the perilous plight in which he was now placed.

He quitted the room for the purpose of holding a short council with the ladies, when, as he crossed the passage, he met Dorothy, the waiting-maid.

"What shall we do, sir?" cried the poor girl, who had been weeping heartily, for she thought that her master's discovery was certain: "it will be impossible to deceive that brute Ryder and his wicked companions. I wish, with all my heart, that one of the ghosts he is so much afraid of would carry him away."

"What ghosts? Dorothy," asked Sir William.

"Oh, sir, he believes in all manner of ghosts, and is as much afraid of them as a little child at a nursery tale."

"Is he, indeed?" exclaimed Sir William, who saw through this hint an assailable point in the Club man, on which he thought he might make a successful attack. "You are quite sure of this, Dorothy?"

"Quite sure, your honour; why he believes that Calverley Wood is haunted by Sir Roger's ghost to this day."

"That is the only respectable part of his character that I have yet been able to discover," replied Sir William, as he hastened back to the room in which he had left the Roundhead.

He again attempted to engage the miller in conversation; and, thanks to the ale which the latter had drunk, he did so with a little better success.

"Brother," said Sir William with a deep groan, and at the same moment turning up his eyes until nothing but the white of them was to be seen—

"brother, we live in dreadful times! Not only does the wickedness of man vex the righteous of the land, but the great enemy himself roams about unchained among us!"

At the moment when Sir William had began to speak Ryder had stuck a large piece of bread, wedge-shaped, and weighing a quarter of a pound, into his enormous mouth; and, such was the impression made upon him by the knight's speech, that he sate with his mouth and eyes wide open, and the bread fixed as if it was never to move again. Sir William saw he had made a hit, and went on.

"Yea, my brother, the devil himself is come amongst us, and roars and roams about, seeking whom he may devour."

"The Lord preserve us!" ejaculated Ryder, as soon as he had extricated the crust from his ponderous jaws, "dost mean that th' oud one himself is on earth?"

"As surely he is, my brother, as that thou and I are sinners—and, what is more, he has become a cavalier, and has taken the king's side."

"Why how do'st know, man," cried Ryder, who trembled in every joint.

"Has not the news reached thee, then?" asked Sir William, affecting some surprise: "hast thou not heard of this malignant enemy, whom men call Prince Rupert?"

"No, only that he 's a Jarman prince without

land or money, and that he comes here to fight for so much of ours as ever he can get."

"He is the devil's prime agent, and works by the assistance of hell, to the discomfort of the saints."

"Oh Lord!" exclaimed the Club man.

"Did you ever see him?" asked the knight.

"Yes," replied Ryder.

"Well, and did you not think he looked as if he dealt with the devil?"

"I think he has a wild kind of an outlandish look."

"The fires of hell burn in his eyes; he sits in his quarters reading at night without a candle. And did you ever see the great black dog which constantly goes about with him?"

"Oh yes, often; and once tried to shoot it."

"But could not?"

Ryder shook his head.

"No wonder, for that black dog is the devil incarnate—the foul fiend himself.* Have you heard what he did at Marston Moor?"

"No."

"Why, the prince was unhorsed, and lying in the midst of a band of our soldiers, who, if he

* In the old Duchess of Orleans' "Memoirs of the Regency" she has, among a thousand other very odd and amusing things, the following:— "I have heard it said that in England the people used to take my late uncle Rupert for a sorcerer, and his large black dog for the devil; *for this reason, when he joined the army, and attacked the enemy, whole regiments fled before him.*" The latter fact is perhaps the most questionable part of the story.

were not really a fiend, would soon have made an end of him; when suddenly this black dog burst in among them, and, taking the prince up in his mouth, threw him, as easily as a fox would throw a turkey, across his back, and carried him off. The soldiers of Cromwell's troop say they struck at the dog repeatedly, but their swords either fell short or sounded upon his black hide like hammers upon an anvil, and made as little impression. He carried his burden off safely; and, in less than five minutes, the prince was mounted again, and renewed the charge."

"Oh Lord, oh Lord!" cried Ryder, as he wiped away the large drops which terror had wrung from his forehead, "what is to become of the holy cause if our enemies have the aid of Satan? I fear no man alive, be he prince or Jarman, or cavalier, or what not; but I can't fight Old Scratch."

"Trust to thy own righteous acts, and the prayers of the saints."

"Pray for me then, holy Sir, for I had rather trust to thy prayers than my own righteousness; of which, sinner as I am, it becomes me not to speak."

For once in his life Sampson Ryder told the truth. Sir William saw that he had gained a certain ascendency over him, which he believed would be quite enough for his purpose. His chief object now was to prevent the departure of the

miller before night-fall, when he trusted that he should be able, by some means or other, to secure Sir Edward's passage through the barrier, which was guarded by Ryder's men. He, therefore, continued to invent a thousand other lies, all as frightful as that of Prince Rupert and his black dog, and all concerning the devil in person, until he found he had the miller completely in his hands.

The day had now nearly closed in, and Ryder was impatient to depart, telling his reverend friend plainly that he did not like to ride through Calverley Wood after dark if he could avoid it.

"But in my company," said the supposed Ananias, "what can you have to fear? I defy the evil one and all his legions: trust on me, my son, and fear nothing."

Ryder, as may be guessed, was as credulous and superstitious on this point as he was fierce and unassailable on any other; and he acquiesced in all that Brother Fats suggested. Sir William was not a man to lose any of the advantages which were thus presented to him, and he found little difficulty in inducing the Club man to stay. He left him for a short time while he went to Lady Vavasour, and informed her of the plan he meant to pursue. He enjoined her, in the first place, to commence the preparations for her departure without manifesting the least concern to the people about the house. He promised that he

would do all in his power to ensure the escape of Sir Edward; and he had already done so much that she could not doubt his zeal or his ability. He begged her, besides, to pursue her journey, without stopping, to the first stage, which had been previously fixed upon, and which was about twelve miles off. This being arranged, he went into the chamber of Sir Edward, to whom he explained all that he had gathered from the Club man.

"There is nothing," he said, "to be done with this ruffian but by frightening him; I advise you, therefore, to steal out by the garden-gate, and make the best of your way to the wood. We must needs pass through it in our way from this place. I will contrive so that Ryder shall be my *compagnon de voyage*, and shall have much mistook my man if I do not make him aid our project in some way or other. I mean to frighten him with the old story about Sir Roger de Calverley; do you take care to be near the road, and contrive by some signal to let me know you are within hearing; you must then keep very close to us: you will know the miller by his white coat; he rides a very stout gelding, which can carry two for a few miles as well as need be. When I shall say 'Loup on' for the third time, you must jump up behind the miller, and spur his horse as hard as you can, while you gripe him tightly. If the worst comes to the worst, and the villain should not be so much frightened as I reckon

upon, you must put a stop to his resistance by killing him; but, as the county is full of his friends, this would, at all events, be dangerous, and I hope will not be necessary. If, however, it should, you must do any thing but shoot him, for that will make a noise, and ruin all. Now God be with you!" he said, squeezing his friend's hand: "away to the garden-gate; keep near the path in the wood; and remember, the third time that I shall say 'Loup on,' you must be *en croupe*."

Sir William then returned to his companion, whom he found recovered from his panic, and giving directions to his men. Five of them Ryder ordered to remain at Calverley Hall, to take charge of and keep the place; the others he dismissed to return and take up their posts in the house near the barrier by the bridge, through which they were to suffer no persons, whether friend or foe, to go over after he, Ryder, and the reverend elder, Ananias Fats, should have passed. "And, hark ye," said he to his lieutenant, "let none of the men get drunk;—and don't stop me to ask the watchword as I pass: 'zounds, they ought to know my coat if the night were as dark as Christmas. Let me and the reverend brother pass; you can make no mistake with his black and my white coat; and, if the parliament itself should come, let no one else pass Bradford Gate until daylight."

The fellow made an ugly bow, by which he meant to express that he understood, and should obey, his commander's bidding; and then mounting, he got his company into such order as they were capable of, and set off at a quick pace towards the gate alluded to. The carriage was soon afterwards brought round to the hall-door, and every thing was ready for departure. The two ladies bade farewell to the ancient building in which they had both enjoyed so much happiness, and with abundance of tears, which were rather shed for the peril in which they knew Sir Edward to stand than because they were about to quit Calverley, they began their journey.

Ryder would now have set off also; but the worthy and reverend elder, drawing him back by the arm into the hall in which they had before been sitting, told him he had a word or two for his private ear. When they entered he pointed to a seat; and, taking one himself, "My brother," he said, "these benighted sinners, dark as they are in the ways of their own conceit, have nevertheless certain worldly knowledge, which the truly righteous—such as thou and I, brother—need not disdain to profit by. During my sojourn here I have discovered that within these walls there is a small parcel of a curious and ancient wine; a wine indeed so ancient that it ought not to tarry longer without drinking, and it can never be better drunk than at the present moment."

Ryder was afraid of spirits—but not of wine; he had already drunk enough to give him an inclination for drinking more, and he needed little pressing to fall into the proposition. The reverend Ananias went to a cupboard in the hall, and produced from its recesses two cobwebbed long-necked flasks, the tops of which were covered with that faded green wax which is a thousand times more delightful to the eye of a real connoisseur than the *ærugo* that covers the rarest coins of antiquarian treasure.

The Club man, although he had never seen such things before, had an instinctive veneration for bottles like these; and "the divinity that stirred within them" exercised its influence even over so insensible a clod as he was. The seeming Ananias produced a corkscrew, with which he released the cork from its imprisonment of many years; and the wine, as if rejoicing at its freedom, emitted a perfume to which wild flowers and spring mornings are only secondary in the scale of deliciousness.

Sampson Ryder snuffed up with eagerness and delight the rich and unwonted scent which now reached his olfactory nerves. He already enjoyed it in anticipation; but, when Ananias poured out a bumper of the sparkling liquor, the miller seized it, and, swallowing it at long gulps, his delight knew no bounds: he swore it was the only liquor that a freeman and a soldier ought to

drink, and declared he was willing to fight up to his knees in the blood of cavaliers for such a beverage. Sir William encouraged this temper; and, by the fascinations of his conversation, which he possessed the rare and valuable faculty of adapting to the characters of various persons, he kept Ryder talking and drinking with him until the night had completely set in, and the Club man, though not absolutely drunk, was reasonably stupid.

Brother Ananias now pretended to be in a great hurry to depart, and threw out some obscure hints of having been directed by high authority to watch the Calverley family to the coast, by which insinuations he increased his own importance in the mind of his besotted companion, and effectually avoided suspicion. The horses were ordered; and the travellers mounting, Ryder upon his own gelding, and Ananias upon a stout hackney belonging to Sir Edward, they manfully took the road.

As soon as they were at a short distance from the hall the false Puritan began to lead the discourse towards the subject of supernatural appearances. This was much to the vexation and discomfort of Sampson, who did not, however, like to show his terror, or to affront the worthy gentleman who had introduced him to a sample of such Burgundy as had induced him to form the pious resolve of returning on the following

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day to Calverley, for the purpose of appropriating to himself all that he could find in the cellars.*

Sir William went on, therefore, unchecked in his stories about ghosts and devils, and brought the discourse, by an easy transition, from goblins in general to that which was universally believed to haunt Calverley Wood. "You know, of course," he said to his companion, "the history of Sir Roger de Calverley."

"Oh, yes," replied Ryder eagerly, in the hope that his acquiescence might have the effect of diverting the conversation from this topic.

Sir William looked narrowly around him, for they had now arrived at the thickest part of the wood, through which their path lay. He perceived a figure behind him, which he immediately guessed to be that of Sir Edward: he waved his hand, unseen by his companion, and saw that his signal was returned: satisfied on this point, he resumed the subject of the ghost.

"Then," he said, "if you know the history of Sir Roger de Calverley, you know all about *Loup on.*"

* We must state here, for the satisfaction of our readers, that when, at a subsequent period, he did venture upon this design, he was miserably thwarted; for all the doors of the choicest cellars had been so carefully bricked up, that, not, being in possession of the private marks, by which alone they could be discovered, he was unable to find them, and the wine remained safe in its hiding-place.

"No, I don't," said Ryder, whose curiosity was as great as his superstition.

"No!" exclaimed Ananias in seeming surprise: "then I must tell you that Sir Roger de Calverley was, as you are aware, some centuries ago, the possessor of this estate. He was a brave and generous man; had served gallantly in the wars abroad; and lived afterwards on his own patrimony, as an English knight should do, making himself and his tenantry happy and contented. He was married to a lady who was as beautiful and good as he was brave and honest; and for some years they lived in uninterrupted felicity. They had three children, who added to their happiness; and, if experience did not daily show us that it is the lot of mortality to have bitterness mingled in their sweetest draughts, it should have seemed that this couple were beyond the reach of misfortune. A storm of misery was, however, about to burst over their heads, and to involve them in ruin."

"Well, I know the whole story," cried Ryder, with a little of impatience in his tone.

"No, you do not," replied Ananias; "let me proceed, for the best part of it is in the sequel. Sir Roger had one fault, and a grievous one it was; but it was one which often accompanies the best natures. He was inconceivably jealous; and, although the virtue and propriety of his wife had hitherto given him no reason to indulge in it, he

was himself aware that, if it once should take possession of his bosom, he should not be able to control it. It sometimes happens that the dread one has of doing any particular thing leads one to do it; and so it was in this instance. This does not happen, it is true, to sound minds; but very passionate minds are never very sound ones. From constantly thinking of jealousy, Sir Roger became jealous, and watched his innocent and light-hearted wife with an intenseness which was of itself an evident mark of insanity. A spark was only necessary to cause the explosion of the fierce contents of his heart; and, by her ill fortune, his wife furnished this. One day, at dinner, the fond father was caressing one of his children, while he kept a wolf's eye on the mother; although, perhaps, he loved her no less at this moment than he had ever done. She, in the lightness of her heart, and with a wish to divert the moody temper of her husband, which had long caused her great anxiety, said to him jestingly, 'I wonder how so grim-looking a father could have so fair a child.' In a moment the demon raged within Sir Roger's bosom: he became ungovernably mad; and, rising from the table, he roared to his terrified wife, 'You confess it then, adulteress! you confirm my worst suspicions! all my happiness is demolished at once, and hell is broke loose upon earth. But I will be revenged,' he cried—'I will be the dupe and wittol no longer;' and, seizing

one of the knives on the table, he plunged it into the bosom of the child he had been caressing the moment before. The mother, horror-stricken, caught the other child in her arms, and fled away: Sir Roger followed her; and, as she entered her chamber, tore the infant from her arms, and it soon fell another victim to his blind fury. The lady threw herself under the bed which stood in the room; but even this retreat afforded her no shelter from the madness of her husband. He drew his sword, with which he thrust at her several times; and, at length, believing he had dispatched her, he went down to the stables and saddled a horse, for the purpose of finishing the extermination of his family by the slaughter of his eldest son, then at a school about ten miles distant. An old servant of the house, who had witnessed, but could not prevent, these horrors, rode off at the same time; and, passing his master on the road, arrived at the school in time to give notice of his intention, and to save the child. Sir Roger was immediately apprehended, and carried to London; when he was brought to trial for the murder of his children. Upon being arraigned he refused to plead, and was, therefore, condemned to the dreadful sufferance of the *peine forte et dure*. Do you know what that is?"

"Not exactly," replied Ryder.

"Why, then," said Sir William, "it is this: when a prisoner, arraigned of a felony, refuses to an-

swer to his arraignment, the Court orders 'that he be remanded to the prison from whence he came, and put into a low dark chamber, and there laid upon his back on the floor—naked, unless where decency forbids; that there be placed upon his body as great a weight of iron as he could bear—and more; that he have no sustenance, save only, on the first day, three morsels of the worst bread; and, on the second day, three draughts of standing water that should be nearest to the prison-door; and that he should not eat on the same day that he drank, nor drink on the same day that he ate; and that he should be without any litter or other thing under him; and that one arm should be drawn to one quarter of the room with a cord, and the other to another; and that his feet should be used in the same manner; and that in this situation he should remain until he answered.'*

"And all this Sir Roger endured, being resolved to expiate in his death, as far as he could, the wrong he had done to his family. If he had pleaded, he must of necessity have been tried; and his wife and his servants would have been compelled to give evidence against him. This dreadful pain he was resolved to spare them. Be-

* The attorney had carefully gathered the very words of the sentence, by which this frightful torture was directed, from the old law-books, in which it is mentioned; and thought, as probably the readers will think, that they added an extraordinary dash of horror to his tale.

sides which, if he had been convicted, (and there could be no doubt that he would have been,) his lands would have been forfeit to the king, and his heir a beggar: to avoid this, therefore, he remained mute, and was treated in the manner I have described to you. Being a man of prodigious strength, and able to bear great fatigue, it was several days before a period was put to his sufferings: at length, worn out by the acuteness of his pain, and by the tardiness with which Death approached him, he called out, after being silent ever since his apprehension, 'If there be a Yorkshireman in the room, for the love of Christ, let him *loup on;*' meaning that he should thereby increase the weight on his breast, and put an end to his misery."

"Well, mon," said Ryder, who had been listening to hear some new incident in the story which he had not known before, "all this I had heard sin' I were as high as a cabbage-stalk."

"But have you heard, also," said Sir William, who had now got to that part of the wood which he judged fittest for his purpose, and which was near the end of it—"have you heard, also, that the ghost of Sir Roger still haunts this wood?"

"'Marcy's sake, don't talk so hollow," stammered the Club man, while his teeth rattled audibly together: "don't ye talk about the ghosts at all," he added, whispering, "for how can'st tell who be listening to thee?"

"Fear naught," replied Sir William, "but here it is that his ghost does really walk—here in this very wood; and I have heard many a traveller say that he has seen him—nay, more, that he sometimes mounts behind them, and gallops with them to the river, where he quits them; for the spirits of hell, you know, cannot cross a running stream. The only danger, besides the fright, from such a visitation, is, lest the traveller should be induced to break silence: then the ghost would have power to dash him from his saddle, and perhaps to kill him."

"I wish to my heart that we were upon the bridge," said Ryder, whose terrors increased notwithstanding all his efforts to control them.

"He comes," continued Sir William, "in the shape of a tall man.—What's that? Oh, nothing but the white stem of a birch.—Sir Roger comes in the shape of a tall man; and, before the traveller is aware, he leaps on to the horse's crupper, calling out, in a voice as solemn and hollow as if it issued from a deep grave, *Loup on.*"

At this moment the exclamation of Sir William was echoed by another voice immediately behind the travellers—"Loup on" sounded in the ears of the horror-stricken miller; and, before he could have looked round, even if he had dared to do so, he felt his arms tightly grasped by those of some being who was mounted behind him. The Club man uttered a low groan; but, between

terror and intoxication, was perfectly incapable of exertion, much less of resistance. The horse, either terrified at the supernatural load which he bore, or, as our readers, whom we have been compelled to let into the secret, may think was the more likely, influenced by the spurs of the new comer, set off at a smart gallop, which soon brought them (for Sir William kept up at the same speed) to the gate where Ryder's men were posted. The night was dark; but the Club men, who were on guard, knew their leader's white coat, and, expecting the elder to be in his company, they did not offer to stop the travellers, and merely uttered a surly "Good night."

"The captain is riding his old pace to-night," said one of the Roundheads.

"He rides as if the devil were behind him," said another.

"Belike he is," said the first; "and I wish he may stick to 'un:" for the captain was not too much beloved in his own troop. They then closed the gate.

In the mean time the travellers kept on at speed. Ryder was more than half-inclined to cry out as he passed the gate; but the caution of the elder came across him, and his tongue clave to the roof of his mouth. Trembling with fear, and almost sinking from the rough grasp of the demon who held him, he saw with delight that they were approaching the bridge. It was a rude

wooden structure, with a rail on one side only. The stream beneath was rapid, but not very deep. "Now," thought the frightened Club man, "these horrors will have an end;" but he was again deceived; his horse's fore feet thundered upon the bridge; and at the same moment a loud and dreadful voice roared in his ear "Loup off!" He could bear no more; his strength and his senses yielded at this last blow, as dreadful as it was unexpected; the hot breath of the fiend behind seemed to have blasted his very soul; and he sunk powerless into the arms of his tormentor. The latter, shifting the hold he had upon him, and checking the horse as he directed it nearer to the edge of the water, loosened Sampson's large body from the saddle, and, with a slight twist, tumbled him on to the bridge, whence he rolled into the stream. The cold water, and the terror of drowning, soon roused him from his imaginary fears: he swam to the bank, and got safely landed. Long before this, however, the sound of his horse's hoofs had died away, and the noise of the fiend's mad gallop had given place to the total stillness of the night.

"I shall be sorry if he is drowned," said the ghost of Sir Roger to his companion.

"No fear of that," replied the other, "unless the proverb fails him: his gallows destiny is a better preservative from drowning than the best boat that ever was built."

Half an hour's riding brought them within sight of the place where the carriage had stopped. Sir Edward now dismounted, and turned loose the Club man's horse, which was tolerably blown: he then proceeded on foot to the little inn, where he found his mother and his wife, and relieved them from the agony of suspense in which they had been until assured of his safety. The horses were brought out: Sir Edward mounted in his capacity of servant, and Sir William took his place in the carriage. They proceeded without delay towards Hull, which place they reached without any further accident; and, immediately embarking on board the boat which Sir William had engaged, were landed, after a prosperous voyage of two days, at the port of Boulogne, and found a refuge in the chateau of the elder Lady Vavasour's brother until the Restoration enabled them to return to Calverley.

Ryder, on getting out of the river, made the best of his way back to the guard at the gate, and with the assistance of his men was put to bed, when his fright and his ducking soon brought on a fever, which would perhaps have killed him, but that the lives of such people seem always to be charmed. When he recovered he told the story of his being assailed in the wood by the ghost of old Sir Roger, who mounted behind his horse. He made some trifling additions in his own favour; such as that when they came

to the river he threw himself into it, to escape from the ghost; and that he saw the demon seize the elder, Ananias Fats, and vanish with him in a cloud of fire and smoke. He told this so often that he at length believed it himself; and, as the reverend Brother Fats was never afterwards heard of, there was nobody to contradict him. To this day nothing is more religiously believed by the inhabitants of the neighborhood than that old Sir Roger's ghost haunts Calverley Wood, and will leap on the crupper of any traveller who shall be rash enough to pass it between midnight and cock-crowing.

When the attorney had finished there were various opinions respecting the merit of his story.

My grandmother said she expected to have had a real ghost, and that she loved a real ghost of all things.

Elizabeth said there was no love in it, and that a story without love was good for nothing in the world.

Many other things were said, and still more would have been said, but that it was suggested that the apothecary, to whom the second lot had fallen, ought now to begin his tale.

The apothecary was a tall thin gentlemanly person, of about the age of fifty. He was certainly the thinnest man that I ever remember to have seen in the enjoyment of health.* His life had been of that restless unsatisfactory descrip-

* The attorney, who (although an attorney) was a great wag in his way, used to tell a story about the poor Doctor's spare figure, which he thought was a masterpiece of fun. Divested of all the ornaments with which the attorney's fancy had decked it, the tale was that a country fellow who came to fetch the apothecary to attend his wife was shown into a room, and requested to wait there until the doctor should be disengaged. It happened that in the same room stood a wooden case, in which was a skeleton; and the lout, with that curious disposition which is not uncommon

tion which makes a man wise at the expense of almost all the comforts which people in general think are best worth living for. At the death of his father, which happened before his twentieth year, he received a very slender fortune: this was soon dissipated in the necessary expenses of his profession, and the unnecessary, but, to young and inexperienced medical students, unavoidable expenses of living in London; and, when he had completed his studies and examinations, and had procured a license from the worshipful company of Apothecaries and the Royal College of Surgeons to kill on his own account, he made the agreeable discovery that he might exclaim, with Jaffier, "Now am I not worth a ducat."

This was a fatal blow to the projects which he had long formed, and upon which his happiness depended. A fervent attachment, the growth of years, subsisted between him and a beautiful and amiable girl of his native village. She was

among people of his condition, opened the door of the case, for the purpose of seeing what it contained. A single glance was enough for him, and he ran out of the room, all the small share of sense that he possessed being frightened out of him. When he recovered himself he returned, and, while standing at the door, the apothecary made his appearance. The countryman's terrors were renewed; and, seizing a pitchfork which stood by, he held it out, while he trembled in every limb. "What ails the fellow?" asked the apothecary, who saw his alarm, but could not guess at its cause. "Don't thee come near me," cried the clown—"Don't thee come near, or I'll break thy dry bones. Dost think I don't know thee, Master Skillinton, for all t'hast gotten thy clothes on!"

wholly without fortune; but this consideration was no bar to the arrangements of the lovers for their future happiness, while he thought that he possessed sufficient, at least, to begin the world. The conviction of his own poverty, however, caused the young man to see the affair in a different light. He could bear personal privations, but he could not endure that the woman whom he loved far better than himself should be exposed to the inconveniences and hardships which he, with too much reason, dreaded might attend their marriage. I think he was mistaken—and I think that every man who should act in the same way under similar circumstances would be mistaken. It is more like timidity than delicacy to shrink from such dangers; and it is unwise to expect that there can be any felicity in this world beneath which sorrow or danger does not lurk. "'Tis dangerous," as Hotspur has it, "to take a cold, to sleep, to drink; but, out of this nettle, danger, we pluck the flower, safety." The poor fellow, however, was very young, and this is all that can be said for it: he bade his weeping love farewell, and went to the East Indies to seek fortune by a short cut. Like many other persons, who take short cuts, he missed the road; and, at the end of four years, returned to his native village not much more rich, but a great deal wiser, than he had left it.

His absence had caused more unhappiness to

his Lucy than all the fancied misfortunes he had dreaded could have brought with them in their worst shapes. Anxiety, and "hope delayed, which maketh the heart sick," and the want of that fond and faithful bosom on which the poor girl had always before relied, and where all her fears and doubts had been wont to find rest and consolation, had preyed upon a constitution naturally delicate. Mental sorrow had induced corporeal disease, and a consumption had preyed upon her heart like a canker-worm in a rose; while her beauty became even more striking and touching than before. A very few weeks after his arrival, it was his misery to yield up to the cold grave that lovely form which he thought would have graced his marriage bed; and to part for ever with her on whom, with an unchangeable constancy, he had doted for years, and in whom every affection of his heart was centred.

The shock was too great for human strength to bear; a fever ensued, and he lay for weeks in delirium, and balanced as it were on the edge of the grave, in which all his happiness lay buried. At length he recovered; but the strength and tone of his constitution, already injured by the exertions he had made abroad, were broken for ever. He went to India again, and passed many years in various foreign countries—no one knew exactly where, for he was not very communicative on the subject. When he returned to the village, after an

absence of twenty years, he had got rid of that melancholy which oppressed him before, and a placid cheerfulness had taken its place. He practised his profession rather for the sake of having something to do than in the hope of profit, of which he had no need, his fortunes having improved in his travels so much as to have ensured him a moderate competence. He administered his assistance to such as required it, and was paid, upon the average, by about one patient in ten. He had not, I believe, much money to give away; but he did more good than many richer men, in assuaging the misery of the poor people around him.

He was a great favorite with all our *coterie*, and particularly with my grandmother: she pitied his sufferings, of the details of which I believe she knew more than any other person; and she loved him, besides, for the gentleness of his manners and goodness of his heart, and—because he could tell stories. He would sometimes describe to us the countries he had visited; and I remember I thought the horrors he related were worth all that I heard besides. He was a great hand at describing a tiger-hunt; and the glories of the nabob's courts, at several of which he had been, beat the Arabian Nights hollow in my mind. The tale which he had now to tell was, however, of a more quiet kind; and he began without delay.

HOURS OF PERIL.

The Apothecary's Tale.

——— Thou shalt tell
How thou escaped'st the watch.
ANTONIO AND MELLIDA.

HOURS OF PERIL.

I WAS on my way from Calais to Paris; and, as I fancied that I was in great haste to arrive at the latter city, I resolved to encounter the weather, although it looked with rather a threatening aspect upon me, and the month of October had just begun. It did not fall within my plans to travel post; and, if I chose, I could give you a thousand reasons for it, all of which your good breeding must make you at least *seem* to believe. I prefer, however, to tell the truth; and, without sheltering myself behind the ordinary excuses of the incivility of postilions and the *ennui* of travelling alone, I tell you fairly that the cheapness of the *Diligence* prices mainly recommended it to me. The weather was gloomy; but M. le Conducteur was persuasive, and I listened with a too-yielding credulity (which amiable facility of my temper has led me into many a scrape

before) to his oaths and promises " that it would not, could not, and should not, rain for the forty-eight hours next to ensue." So, like a gull as I was, I consented to occupy the only vacant seat *(sur l'imperiale)* of the top of the diligence, which, for my sins, had no *calêche*.

But there is no faith in man—if ever there was, it has flown away, with a multitude of other good things, to Heaven;—even a conducteur cannot be trusted; for all the assertions of him under whose guidance it was now my fortune to journey were faithless.

Soon after leaving Montreuil, where we dined, it began to rain, and continued in that mild insinuating manner which softens the external surface of your coat, and prepares it for the resolute shower which is in reserve to accomplish your thorough drenching.

" It cannot last long," said the conducteur; and he displayed an umbrella as large as a tent, made of a sort of dark chintz stuff, formerly, he assured me, (and I believed him,) " *la robe de sa grande maman!*"

The rain, however, continued with the most uncivil perseverance to contradict him; and a westerly wind helped to give him the lie—in his teeth. Still the conducteur smoked his pipe; and, while the wet was by slow degrees making the whole of his artificial integuments like a sponge, (for his umbrella was any thing but a

parapluie,) he chanted one and the same song—I saw him buy it in the morning at Calais—the burden of which was

"Dis donc, trompeur, t'en souviens tu?"

I got angry with the rain—tired with the song—sorry that I, too, had not a pipe—and still more sorry that I had taken so exposed a seat. The prospect of passing several more hours in the same situation was as gloomy as the night itself; and I knew, besides, that I could not do so with safety as regarded my health.

"This"—said I to myself, in the tone and temper of a man who has done a silly thing, and has no one else to blame for it—"this comes of your wise economy, and your no less wise haste. I never knew any body in such a hurry to save their time and their money who did not eventually manage to lose both."

To quarrel with myself, I recollected, could do no good; so I resolved, *imprimis,* not to be ill tempered, and, in the next place, to stop at the first house of entertainment where a bed, or at least a shelter, could be obtained.

In half an hour after I had formed my determination I found we were entering the old city of Abbeville, the pointed gables and tall roofs of whose houses were dimly seen by the street lamps, of which there were about three in a quarter of a mile. The post here is, luckily, also an inn; and I resolved to shelter myself

under the Toison D'or, instead of sleeping *à la signe de la Lune*, even if there had been a moon, which there was not.

When I announced this determination to M. le Conducteur I saw that I had lowered myself in his estimation: he thought me before, as he said, *un bon enfant*—one who did not care for the rain. He was sorry to lose my company, for we had been great friends. It was not often (he did me the honour to say) that he met a gentleman who could so well appreciate the enthusiasm with which he told the story of his campaigns, which he did exactly three times in every week to any one who would listen to him. He believed I too was a *militaire*; "and you know, monsieur," said he, "*ce qui ce ressemble se recherche, comme disait le diable au charbonnier*."

I resisted his eloquent appeals, and reconciled him as well as I could to his disappointment by paying his fee for the whole journey. I told him, too, that I was unwell; I reminded him of his promise that it *should* not rain; and sang him his own song—

"Dis donc, trompeur, t'en souviens tu ?"

This restored him to good humour; he was not proof against the charms of song. We drank a glass of brandy together, and parted—he to his post, and I, after having supplied myself with a dry dressing-gown from my *sac de nuit*, to a good fire in the parlour of the hotel.

This room was already occupied by a French gentleman, who, upon mine hostess's intimation that I was wet, and that there was no other fire then lighted, with the politeness common to his countrymen, requested I would do him the favour to share his apartment with him. I am not so slow as some men in making acquaintances ; I found M. Montmorin a well-bred and sensible gentleman, full of information, willing to impart it, and able to do so in a very agreeable manner: we wasted no time, therefore, in looking shy and sulky at each other, but were more intimate, and less reserved, in five minutes, than some Englishmen, who still have a great esteem for each other, would have been in twice as many years.

It is true I discovered also that my companion was a medical man, but I believe there is no free-masonry in physic; at all events I am sure it did not help our intimacy a jot, for we talked very little about it, and, as if by mutual consent, all physic was, on this occasion, " thrown to the dogs."

We sat for some hours chatting, discussing the supper, and a bottle of excellent Burgundy—egad, I think we emptied three—until we thought it expedient to retire to our bed-rooms. Among other topics, on which we talked, the French revolution was, of course, not forgotten ; and M. Montmorin gave me an account of his own escape during that reign of terror, which, it will

be confessed, was so perilous, that he might be justified in calling it one of the most interesting events of his life. I shall repeat it as nearly as I can in his own words :—

" At the beginning of the French revolution," he said, " I was a student of surgery in the first class at the Anatomical College of Paris: my family lived in a distant province, and I had come to the metropolis, as other young men of similar pursuits did, first to acquire the knowledge necessary for practising the medical profession, and then to push my fortune in it as well as I should be able.

" The events of the revolution rendered Paris, dangerous as it was, a safer place for me than any other in France; and I thought I should better escape the consequence of the disturbances, which I hated on all accounts, and had resolved not to interfere in, by quietly pursuing my profession there. I therefore began to practise; but my patients were those who were only useful to me for the opportunities they afforded me of gaining a more intimate and familiar knowledge of diseases. They consisted entirely of persons among the poorer classes of the people; and, although my services were gratuitous, as well because they were unable to pay as because I was unqualified to receive fees, I acquired among them a sort of reputation, and a good deal of employment.

"I was one day quitting the college, when I was met by one of the *Sœurs de la Charité*, by whom my fame had been a good deal spread among such folks as needed her aid and mine.

"Sister Bathilde was a pious, clever, indefatigable, ugly old woman, who went about to the houses of the lowest members of the community, nursing and praying with the sick, and soliciting the charity of good Christians for such as were in need of it. She had long distinguished me with her especial patronage, because she found that I was always ready to attend her calls, having, indeed, no other occupation, and being led by a zeal natural enough to a young man. She now besought me to visit with her instantly one of her unfortunate clients; and, without waiting to give me particulars, led me to the more remote end of the Rue St. Honoré, where, after turning down a long passage, we ascended a staircase, and stopped only when we reached the sixth story. Sister Bathilde knocked at the door; but, receiving no answer, she opened it, and ushered me into a room which presented a deplorable scene of misery and want. I was tolerably well acquainted with the wretchedness which dwelt in the garrets of Paris; and, although I had never beheld any scene of greater horror than was now before me, I was not so much surprised at it as many other persons might have been.

"On a wretched bed on the floor lay the

corpse of an old man, whose emaciated figure and rigid features made him look like the personification of Famine. A young woman, clothed in scanty rags, lay across the body in a fainting fit. It was impossible, notwithstanding the horror of the scene, not to be struck with the elegance of the female's figure: it was rather above the middle size, and seemed to me, who am in the habit of looking at human forms with a critical eye, to be a specimen of the most faultless symmetry that Nature ever formed. Her face could not be seen, for it was buried in the bosom of the corpse; and her long black tresses hung down her half-covered shoulder.

"'Blessed virgin!' cried Sister Bathilde, 'they are both dead!'

"I approached the bodies, and, discovering that the female was alive, removed her to another pallet, even more miserable than that which bore the dead body, and, by the application of such remedies as I had about me, speedily restored her to existence, though not to a consciousness of her situation. She was suffering under a typhus fever in its most alarming stage, and, as soon as she was able to breathe freely, broke out into a fit of the most frightful delirium. The poor sister, terrified, but not deterred from the duties of her pious office, continued to weep and to tremble, while she repeated prayers as fast as she dropped tears.

" At my request she procured the assistance of the occupants of the apartment below, who were only one degree less poor than those above them; and they readily assisted to take charge of the furious maniac, while I went to procure medicines, and to provide for the removal of the dead body. The latter is an affair speedily performed in Paris, and was decently accomplished before I returned with the potion, which had so happy an effect that the wretched girl soon after fell into a profound sleep. Sister Bathilde expressed her intention of remaining with her until she should be better, or until her sorrows should be ended by death; and, after leaving money to provide for the patient's immediate wants, I retired.

" On the next day I again visited my patient, and found her fever somewhat abated, and the fury of her madness entirely subsided, although her mind was still incapable of comprehending her situation.

" I had made some inquiries of the *locataires* of the neighboring apartments, who told me that they knew very little of the young woman, owing to the secluded manner in which she had always lived, shunning their intercourse, and declining all the civilities which they had offered her. She was called, they said, Mademoiselle Aubry, and was one of the dancers at the Opera House.—She had lived here for some months with her

father, the old man who had just died, until, happening by accident to sprain her ankle, she had been unable to attend to her theatrical duties. This accident having deprived her of her only means of support, as the neighbours believed, they thought that the anxiety which it occasioned had brought on her fever; and that famine, or rather, perhaps, the want of such food as was necessary for his situation, had caused the death of her aged parent.

"At this period of my life I was by no means rich; but the allowance made to me for my expenses in Paris was an ample one, and, as I was far from extravagant, I was enabled occasionally to spare some of it. The fate of this unfortunate young woman had interested me greatly, and I continued to supply Sister Bathilde with the small sums which were necessary for her poor patient until her strength was restored. The good sister watched her with a mother's care, and mitigated, as well as she could, Mademoiselle Aubry's grief and horror, when, upon her return to reason, she learnt that her father had been buried three weeks. Her more violent sorrow, however, speedily settled into a wild stern melancholy. She did not weep—she uttered no lamentations—she would sit for hours together with her eyes fixed, and her lips moving with the rapidity of speech, but emitting no sound; while the convulsive throes of her bosom indi-

cated the passionate storm that raged within it. Sister Bathilde told me she thought her patient's mind still wandered—an opinion which I soon discovered was too true. She, however, recovered her bodily health, and then resumed her duties at the theatre.

"One day, when she called to thank me for the services I had rendered her, and which the good sister had much overrated, I could not help expressing some surprise at finding a person of her appearance (for she had been evidently well and expensively educated, and was highly accomplished) in her present situation.

"'Sir,' she replied, 'the time has been when to relate the story of my shame and sorrow would have been impossible to me; but I am now daily learning to forget to feel. The world is worse than a blank to me; I have proved all its worst inflictions; and, although they have broken my heart, and, I fear,' putting her hand upon her head, as if it was the seat of great pain, 'unsettled my reason, I now only wait, despairing as I am, for an opportunity to retaliate.'

"She said this in a way which convinced me that she was still under the influence of mental disease.

"Recovering herself, however, she told me, with an astonishing calmness, that she was the only daughter of a merchant of Lyons, who, left a widower soon after her birth, had employed the

whole of the leisure which his avocations allowed in superintending the education of this child, in whom all his affection was bound up. Among the professors of the new doctrines of the *Philosophes*, at Lyons, was a distant relative of M. Aubry, a young man of fortune, whose name was Mainvielle. To a handsome figure this person added very agreeable manners, and, under a pleasing exterior, concealed one of the basest hearts that the school of modern philosophy ever formed. This young man, whose visits had been encouraged by M. Aubry because he admired his talents, succeeded in gaining the affections of the beautiful Adelaide; and when afterwards her father found it necessary to forbid Mainvielle his house, on account of his open and horrid profligacy, she for the first time discovered that she loved him with all the intensity of an early attachment, and a heart filled with the most fiery impulses. It is needless to describe a passion, the most remarkable character of which is, that, while it magnifies and heightens every praiseworthy quality, it spreads an impenetrable veil over the defects of its object. Adelaide knew Mainvielle's faults, but she fondly imagined they were the faults of youth and an impetuous temper. She believed that her gentle influence, her persuasions, her advice, would make Mainvielle all that even her father could wish him to be. This error, so common to vir-

tuous females, and which springs from their inexperience and ignorance of the nature of vice, was the rock on which her happiness was wrecked. She imagined that she could wipe away the few faults which prevented others from loving her Mainvielle as she thought they ought to love him; and she cherished in her bosom a serpent, whose venom withered her every hope of joy.

"Nothing could be more false than her reasoning; but she loved—and who ever loved and reasoned wisely at the same time? She yielded to the impulses of her own heart and to the persuasions of Mainvielle: she eloped with him; was deserted in a few months; and reached her father's house in a state of frantic despair, just time enough to learn that his ruin had come upon the heels of her own.

"M. Aubry's commercial speculations were upon an extensive scale, and of an intricate nature; his personal and active exertions were necessary to their success; and, as he was unable to make those exertions, in consequence of the overwhelming grief which his daughter's flight had occasioned, he became in a few months a bankrupt and a beggar. The wretched parent left the city, which had witnessed his prosperity, still, as he imagined, rich enough in the possession of his pardoned repentant child, and in the hopes of assistance from friends in Paris, who

had, over and over again, importuned him to permit them to make some return for the services which in his prosperity he had rendered them. On his arrival he found (as all men find) that his friends, by some accident or other, were well furnished with reasons that could not be gainsaid why they should not relieve him. When he had exhausted his last hope, and was without the food which was necessary to sustain life, Adelaide procured it by becoming a *figurante* at the Opera House; and upon the scanty earnings of this degrading labour she and her father lived until the accident which I have mentioned disqualified her for further exertion.

"When she had finished her story I expressed the compassion which I very sincerely felt for her griefs; and offered my services, feeble as they were, to remove her from the employment she had taken up to one better adapted to her talents and accomplishments.

"'I thank you, sir,' she said, 'no less for the benefits I have already received than for those which you now offer me: I am obliged to except you (and I confess that I am ungrateful enough to regret that I must do so) from the hatred which I bear to your whole sex—I had almost said the whole race: I do thank you as much as I can, but I decline your offer. The profession which I now follow supplies all my wants; and, while it makes me independent of the world, it

also insulates me from it. This is the only consideration that reconciles me to my fate. If I owed any thing to society, if the smallest obligation could be claimed from me, I should feel myself really humbled. But the world spurns me, and I am thankful for it. I am happy to be proscribed : I rejoice that doors are shut against me, for these things justify my hatred. I live now only for vengeance : the day approaches when Reason shall fix her throne upon the earth ; when Freedom shall arise a new phœnix from the profane ashes of monarchs and palaces ; when Justice shall be the universal law, and obedience to its decrees the compact by which the people shall be held together. Before that day shall arrive Mainvielle's perjured soul will be the prey of the legioned fiends who wait to snatch it, and my father's ghost shall be appeased !'

" While she uttered this rhapsody she was convulsed with passion, and appeared unconscious of all that was passing around her : having finished it, she sunk into a chair—in a few minutes became more composed—and soon afterwards left me. I saw that she was incurably mad, and I perceived that the spirit of the times had infected her with its most poisonous influence. For many months after this I saw nothing of her ; though I learned that she had become one of the first dancers at the Opera, and that

she had appeared in public as the leader of a band of fanatics, who called themselves the Disciples of Liberty, while she personated the goddess : she was said also to possess great influence with a certain class of the people, and to be countenanced by the Conventional Assembly. During all this time, however, excepting when she was upon the stage or in public, she was wrapped in a moody melancholy, and shunned conversation of every kind, issuing her decrees to the mad mob who followed her in an obscure and oracular style, which was the more admired by them the less they understood it.

" Now it was that the events occurred which placed my life in great jeopardy. A relation, who bore the same name with me, had taken an active part in the insurrection of La Vendée ; and, although I had been living in Paris for four years the quiet life of a student, interfering in no way with the politics of the times, the mere circumstance of my cousin being in arms was thought sufficient to justify my denouncement to the Committee of Public Safety. To be tried and to be executed were now the same thing, for this was just at the period when the Jacobins had triumphed over the Brissotine party ; and the former considered the most sanguinary measures as the safest for themselves, simply because they were the most destructive to their enemies. I

was apprized of my ill fortune only time enough to escape out of my window while the soldiers who were in search of me entered the house.

"I ran, without knowing whither, through several streets; and fearing, as I approached the Opera House, that I might be pursued, I turned into the dark shadow of that lofty building, where I entered a passage, and stood concealed, to ascertain whether I was followed.

"I had not been there a minute when some one coming out ran against me. I begged pardon, and as soon as I spoke the voice of Adelaide exclaimed 'Ah! is it you, M. Montmorin?'

"In a few words I conjured her to be silent, and told her the reason of my being there. Without saying a word, she loosened a large cloak in which she was wrapped, and, throwing it around me, led me to the door, where a coach was waiting. On her appearing the carriage was opened: we both entered it without a word being spoken, and were driven to her house, where we alighted, and, concealing my face in the cloak as she bade me, I ascended the stairs with her.

"We entered a saloon on the first story, which was splendidly furnished, but in such a manner as strongly marked the spirit of those extraordinary times. The various articles—rich, and even gorgeous, as they were—had the appearance of having been brought from twenty different places. The hangings were of velvet, but those of one

side of the room were different from those of the other ; the tables, couches, and chairs, had never been associated until they came together in that chamber : in short, every thing spoke of plunder and extravagance, and would have filled me with astonishment, but that I knew too well the excesses which had been practised by the leaders of the revolutionary factions, with whom, as I have said, I had heard that Mademoiselle Aubry was connected.

" Whatever her faults were, I am convinced they were the consequences of the cruel treatment she had experienced, and of the sorrows which had unsettled her reason. At all times, even when she was most composed, there was a wild glare in her eyes which spoke the unsettled and tortured state of her mind ; and she would occasionally fall into fits of abstraction, so profound as to render her wholly insensible to external objects. In all her actions I saw unquestionable proofs of insanity ; and I could hardly congratulate myself on having escaped the danger in which I had just been placed, since I had only changed it for so insufficient a protection as she could afford me.

" We began to converse on the subject of my affairs ; and here she astonished me by the accuracy and interest with which she inquired into the most minute particulars of my conduct, and the affairs of my family, in order to ascer-

tain exactly upon what grounds the suspicions under which I had fallen were founded. The distraction I had before observed was now no longer apparent, although her eyes had still the same wild, but brilliant, glare. She wrote in a pocket-book all such details as she thought necessary; and, this being finished, she said—

"'I rejoice to find that there is not the slightest ground for the accusation that you are an enemy to freedom and a new state of society: but your danger is not therefore removed. At this moment to be suspected is to be guilty. The committees act upon a rigorous and a hateful, but, surrounded as they are by enemies of all sorts, perhaps a necessary policy: they order the execution of every body brought before them; and their sole object seems to be that the guillotine shall be hourly exercised. Your only safety, therefore, is in lying hidden until the means can be provided for your quitting Paris. How those means are to be accomplished I cannot even guess at present; but a short period will, most probably, in these times, make some change. At all events here you must remain, where you will be in perfect concealment, and therefore in perfect safety.'

"I was by no means so entirely convinced of my safety; but I thanked her.

"'We have no time to lose,' she said, inter-

rupting me: 'I must now install you in your new abode.'

"I followed her into a boudoir which adjoined the saloon where we had been sitting. She pushed aside a *chaise longue* which stood against the wall, and, pressing against one of the painted panels of the little chamber, it opened upon a small *escalier derobé*, which led to the *entre sol*, or floor between the rooms on the basement and the first floor. We descended, and I found it consisted of two apartments of the same size as the rooms above, but with the ceilings very low, as they must necessarily be from the construction of the chambers. They were comfortably furnished, and admirably adapted for the purposes of concealment, having no other entrance than that from the boudoir.

"'Here,' she said, 'you must be contented to remain until I can arrange for your departure. My servant, in whose fidelity I can wholly confide, shall wait upon you, and I will visit you as often as I can spare time from the employments and duties which press upon me. I can assure you,' she added, 'that I am much changed from what I was when you knew me last; and that, instead of being the friendless and destitute wretch whom your humanity saved from famine and disease, the fortunes and even the lives of thousands are in my hands. Would to Heaven!'

she said, with a mournful and emphatic gesture, 'that I had been called to some other destiny; but we are all the creatures of fate. Be satisfied of this, at least, that your life is much more valuable to me than my own, and that I will preserve you at the price of every thing most dear to me.'

"Soon after this she left me, and ascended to her own apartments. Her servant regularly attended me, supplied all my wants, brought me books which her mistress sent, and did every thing to render my imprisonment as light as possible. Mademoiselle Aubry, too, came and sate with me occasionally for a short time: her conversation, with respect to the strange commotions which then shook Paris to its centre, and which changed with the rapidity of lightning, and almost as destructively, was always so ambiguous, that I fancied at first it was an affectation, for the purpose of impressing me with a notion of her importance. I had reason afterwards to know that I was mistaken, and that she was really deeply concerned in the plots of the party which had just then obtained the ascendency. Our conversations never terminated without her having in the course of them made some allusion to Mainvielle, her seducer, and the cause of her own misery and shame and of her father's death; and she did not scruple to avow to me that she would pursue him to the grave. Remonstrance or advice on this point were equally vain: she

listened to me, but it was always with a fixed purpose not to be swayed by what I said, and with the desperate resolution of madness.

"Under the protection of such a person, you may imagine that I was not very tranquil. At first my seclusion was endurable; I read, wrote, walked about my chamber, and got through the first day pretty well. I felt that, irksome as this mode of life was, still, as it was life, I ought to be satisfied; and the thoughts of the guillotine helped to reconcile me to it. I began to seek for amusement without my chamber, and found it in watching the crowds of persons, of all descriptions, whom, at every hour of the day, I saw crowding into a mean-looking house opposite. I was strictly prohibited from taking down the blinds of my windows; but I was at liberty to avail myself of the opportunity they afforded me of looking through, which in this instance was quite enough for my purpose.

"For a long time I was puzzled with endeavoring to guess what common cause could bring together so many persons of different appearance. Among them I saw ladies, probably of rank, certainly of respectability, as well as the women of the markets; priests and advocates, as well as artisans and *sans culottes;* in short, every variety of character that the city of Paris could then produce, and such as were upon no other occasion ever found in the same place. They all

approached the house with a solemn and anxious air; the passage was soon filled, and the visitants took their places *en queue* in the street, advancing, as their predecessors retreated, slowly and at short intervals. As they went away their appearance was still more remarkable: some of them seemed to be plunged in the deepest melancholy; others bustled off with alacrity and evident satisfaction.

"At length I learnt from the servant the occupation of the person who attracted all these visitors, and my wonder was considerably diminished. He was a fortune-teller, and one who exercised an astonishing influence over the minds of people of all conditions. I now observed with still greater minuteness, and found that my window commanded a view of an apartment which I had not noticed before, and in which M. Martin (for such was the appellation of this renowned Magus) received the crowds who came to consult him.

"The prophet was as unpromising a person in his appearance as can be imagined: he had none of the qualifications which one should think indispensable for carrying on with success such an imposture as he had got up; on the contrary, he was a wretched-looking little man, whose lower extremities were so crippled, either by the effect of disease or by some natural defect, that he was obliged to use two crutches

with which he dragged his mishapen carcass to various parts of his chamber, as might be necessary. He received his visitors sitting in a large chair, and having a table before him, upon which was spread a large geographical chart; and he held in his hands a pack of cards. Nothing could exceed the gravity with which he put questions to his visitors, and who, on their part, were all in that sort of consternation which suited his purpose admirably. When he had obtained from them such particulars as he judged necessary to enable him to expound their destiny, he began to shuffle his cards with great rapidity, and to consult his chart. When he had passed a few minutes in this manner, accompanying his manœuvres with a thousand extravagant grimaces, he would mutter the result of his speculations to his clients, and send them away, some full of delight, others in despair, but none of them doubting the veracity of his predictions.

"When I inquired of Mademoiselle Aubry, on her next visit, respecting this singular person, she told me that he was, beyond all question, a great impostor, but that, like many other impostors, he had now so long practised his deceptions that he was himself deceived, and believed very firmly in the truth of his prognostications.

"'But,' I said, 'I am astonished that the public authorities, who pretend to be averse to every thing which is not rational, and, as they call it,

philosophical, can permit such barefaced juggling.'

" ' Nor would they permit it,' she replied, ' but that it is useful to their own designs. This man serves them as a spy, and as a spy of the most valuable kind, for he is himself not aware of the assistance he renders them. In a room beyond that in which you can see him receive his visitors, and separated from it by a very thin partition, is an agent of the police, who takes down in a register the names of the persons who come to consult M. Martin, and such particulars as their conference with him may elicit. This register is afterwards carefully inspected, and has often been the means of discovering secrets of the utmost importance ; and which, but for this, would never have been unravelled. Martin, although perfectly uneducated, is a man of great acuteness : he possesses in an eminent degree the art of penetrating the characters of persons ; and, while he fancies that he can predict destinies, he often provokes them by the informations which he makes his visitors give against themselves.'

" ' But still,' I said, ' I cannot help being infinitely surprised that so many persons should be found who will suffer themselves to become the dupes of so gross an impostor.'

" ' It is one of the consequences of these most singular times. The terror which reigns through-

out the country, and particularly in Paris, has paralysed even the firmest minds, and rendered them all open to superstitious influences. Five years ago Martin's trade would not have procured him bread, and, probably, would have introduced him to the Bicêtre : now it enables him to keep a handsome equipage, and makes him courted by all conditions of people.'

" ' And upon what subjects,' I asked, ' is he principally consulted ?'

" ' Upon every one that you can imagine to be interesting to any description of persons. They come to him to inquire about lost and stolen goods—marriages, and affairs of gallantry—the guillotine—in short, upon all subjects indiscriminately ; and, although his predictions are, I dare say, equally valuable upon all, it is upon questions of robbery that he piques himself most.'

" ' And for what reason ?' I asked.

" ' Because he has been most successful in resolving such questions. It is true he always requires some time to deliberate upon these subjects, and makes his inquirers repeat their visits ; but, ultimately, he generally succeeds in pointing out to them the means of recovering their property, or, at least, of bringing the offenders to justice.'

" ' And how is he enabled to effect this ?'

" ' By means of the police, who, upon the first

application of the persons that have been robbed, set about making inquiries; and, when they have discovered the culprits, they leave to Martin the credit of giving the necessary information, which at once saves them the trouble of prosecutions, and keeps their valuable agent in perfect good humour.'

"When Mademoiselle Aubry left me, I continued to observe the conjurer's proceedings, and, with the explanation she had given me, I was no longer at a loss to account for the strange concourse of people which I saw hourly about his dwelling. From what I have since learnt, I have no doubt that this man was one of the most powerful agents in bringing about the various changes of the Revolution, by the constant and correct information which he furnished to the ruling parties and to the police.

"The time, however, began to pass very heavily with me, and the irksomeness of my confinement seemed daily to increase. I endeavored to divert my mind from the melancholy thoughts which pressed upon it with an intolerable weight, but the effort was almost in vain: I became restless and nervous; I could not sleep, my appetite failed, and I lost all interest in looking at the fortune-teller and his clients. The rooms seemed to have become too small and too low for respiration, and I felt constantly as if I was in danger of suffocation. I began to compare the danger I

ran of losing my life with the pain of staying longer in this place, which, though it contained every accommodation, was more hateful to me than the worst prison. At length I could endure it no longer, and I resolved, at all hazards, to quit it.

"When I reflect upon the sensations I then experienced, I am filled with astonishment at them, and can only account for them on the score of the nervous excitement which my danger had produced. I had often before remained, for the purpose of study, in rooms neither so airy nor so convenient as these, without experiencing any such pain: but now death seemed preferable to the anxiety and confinement I endured. The absence of Mademoiselle Aubry for three days deprived me of the only solace which lightened my dreariness, and confirmed me in the resolution which I had formed. I was only anxious that my flight should not involve her in any danger; and, night having come, I removed the fastening of my window, and dropped into the street without any noise, and, as I believed, unperceived. I went immediately to the garden of the Thuilleries, where I passed the night in one of the trees. As soon as the morning arrived I went in search of a friend, on whose assistance I knew I could rely. As I approached the house in which he lived I was struck by the altered appearance it exhibited. I mounted the staircase

hesitatingly, and filled with a fatal presentiment. It had usually been remarkable for the cleanliness and propriety with which it was kept, but it was now strewed with the most filthy and disgusting objects. I approached a door which was half open, and saw, in the room to which it led, a ruffian, with the *bonnet rouge* on his head, employed in mending an old shoe, and sitting upon the couch of my friend. I looked over the door, and saw inscribed in ill-shaped letters, and with chalk, '*Le Citoyen Rodier, Savetier.*' I could no longer doubt the horrible truth: my friend had fallen beneath the guillotine; and the citizen whom I saw pursuing his avocation of a cobbler had taken possession of his apartments. I turned away sickening and disgusted, and bent my steps towards another part of the city; but none of the persons whom I went in search of could be found. Most of them had fallen victims to the horrors of the times; and such as were fortunate enough to escape had saved their lives by flight. These disappointments filled me with despair, and increased the recklessness I before felt as to my own fate. I spent the whole day in wandering about, and towards nightfall, being exhausted with fatigue and anxiety, I crossed over to the Cité, where I entered a cabaret commonly resorted to by the charcoal-porters of the neighborhood. I took my seat with as unconcerned an air as I could

put on, and, calling for some wine, I began to contemplate the persons who sat about me, and whose numbers continued to increase. Their characters and conversation were such as at any other time would have amused me; but now my spirits were broken with care and anxiety.

"When I had been here about a quarter of an hour a person entered, who seemed to command universal respect from the ruffians by whom I was surrounded. The new-comer wore the uniform of an officer of the National Guard: he had a large cocked-hat, with a tri-coloured cockade in it, and a sash of the same kind round his waist. A brace of heavy pistols were stuck into this sash, and a long sword hung by his side. As I looked at him I recognised him to be a man who had lived in the neighborhood of my lodgings, and who had been an industrious locksmith until the Revolution furnished him with another and a better trade. His name was Le Franc: he was an uncommonly powerful man, and had the reputation of being one of the most resolute fellows in his quarter. He looked round with an air of superior impudence, slightly returning the greetings of the persons present, all of whom seemed to know him. He fixed his eyes upon me, and slightly touched his hat, which salutation I returned. He then came up to me, and, filling a glass with my wine, he held it out. I did not know whether he was a friend or a foe;

but I judged it unwise to refuse the proffered civility. We touched glasses.

"'*Vive la Republique!*' said he.

"'*Vive la Republique!*' I replied, and the toast was immediately drunk with great fervour by the whole of the company.

"Le Franc took his seat by my side; and a story, which his arrival had interrupted, was resumed by a little ragged vivacious vagabond, who called himself a professor of music, and who seemed delighted that he had permission to proceed:

"'You all know, citizens, that the stupid old bigot, the curate of St. Sulpice, has refused to take the national oath. Not, however, content with this, he had determined to make his refusal public; and, in the hope of becoming a martyr, he announced his intention of doing so in the church this day. Of course crowds of people were drawn to see so imprudent and mad a piece of foolery; and the crazy old *calotin* had a full audience, and as fair a prospect of getting his brains knocked out as any old gentleman could desire; for among the congregation were many of our friends armed, and who had gone for the purpose of preventing any disturbance of the public tranquillity by killing whoever should attempt it. The old curate mounted the pulpit with a very imposing air, and thundered away with a most frightful sermon about the other world, and that

warm part of it which he plainly told us we were all destined to inhabit. As he found the people bore this pretty well, and only laughed at him, he began to quit his theology, and to touch upon politics. He commenced a long diatribe against the National Assembly, and became so abusive that it was too much for his hearers; they began to murmur, and at last to break out into loud threats. The poor curate turned pale, and a great outrage would perhaps have been committed but for a happy thought which just then suggested itself to me. Yes, citizens, it was I who prevented the holy curate from being made a martyr, and changed the indignation of the whole assembly into merriment! And how do you think I did it? You would never guess, so I'll tell you. I stole into the organ-loft, and, just as the tumult was getting at its height, I struck up *Ça Ira* as loud as ever I could play it. In a moment the face of things was changed: the lively air rang through the old vaulted roofs, which had never echoed to such a tune before; and every body was filled with good humour and patriotism. Some wag called out "Room for a dance!" Immediately every citizen present got himself a partner, and the church looked like a Turkish mosque filled with dancing dervises. The poor old curate was choused out of his martyrdom, and laughed at instead of being killed. Every body went home in good humour; and,

without being vain, I think I am entitled to some praise for the ingenious and novel manner in which I preserved the peace of the nation.'

"A loud shout of applause followed the tattered musician's recital, and he received the compliments and congratulations of every body present.

"Le Franc took this opportunity of addressing himself in a whisper to me.

"'I have had a long search after you,' he said, 'and in pretty company I find you at last.'

"'I did not want you to search for me,' I replied, 'and it cannot concern you in what company you find me. Surely you mistake me for some other person.'

"'No, I do not,' he replied, 'and, unless you speak lower, our friends here will know you as well as I do. This is no place for explanation; but, as we can't go out immediately, I'll let you into the characters of some of these gentlemen whose society you have chosen.'

"I had every inclination in the world to knock down my familiar acquaintance; but, besides that he was very much bigger and stronger than I, (and these are, in all conscience, reasons enough for not indulging such an inclination,) the consequence would have been certain death to me from the people about us: I therefore listened to him as he went on.

"'You see that ruffian with the beard, who

sits under the lamp yonder—Do you know who he is?'

"I replied that I did not.

"'That is the celebrated executioner—the owner of *rasoir national,* as he facetiously calls it. He has great need of a razor himself, as you may perceive by the length of his beard; and I know of none that would suit him so well as his own. He was formerly a slave in Morocco, where he rendered himself infinitely agreeable to the emperor, who is said to take great delight in seeing five or six heads cut off every morning before breakfast, for his own particular amusement. There it was that our friend suffered his beard to grow, of which he is now so proud. To an aspiring mind like his the petty pleasures of such a court as that of Morocco could not be satisfactory, and his merit and his destiny have led him to Paris, where, instead of six heads, he daily takes them off by dozens. You perceive the remarkable colour of his beard: that is produced by the blood of his victims, with which he carefully stains it; and so well pleased is he with this distinction, that he was seen at Versailles, lately, to draw his cloak up about his mouth, to prevent the rain from washing what he thinks an honorable mark from his filthy beard. He is a great joker in his way, and sometimes tells his victims on the scaffold that he will trouble them to "put their heads out of his little window," and

calls the office he performs " a patriotic foreshortening." I see you are somewhat disgusted with him; so look at the tall man opposite to him; who is dressed literally in the costume of the *sans culottes*, but whose profusion of dirty linen forms a singlar contrast to his nakedness in every other respect. Shall I tell you where he got his shirt?—A few days ago the church of St. Genevieve was plundered, and he carried off for his own share the surplices worn by the choristers, which he has had transformed into these necessary articles of dress, and he now wears shirts for the first time in his life. That ferocious-looking woman, who wears a priest's robe by way of gown, is his companion, and shared in the plunder, part of which you now see. The little red-nosed man who is talking to her, and who is so drunk that he cannot speak intelligibly, was formerly a priest; but, when the Revolution broke out, his dissolute propensities and his fear of death made him turn patriot. He has countenanced and instigated more atrocities than, perhaps, any other private person in Paris. He has great influence with the lower order of the people, and particularly with the *gentler* sex, for he has a vulgar forcible style of talking, to which his habitual drunkenness adds great *onction*. That tall lean man at the other table, whose scraggy neck looks as if it invited our bearded friend's national razor, was a member of the learned profession,

and notorious for the length and dulness of his speeches: he was called, in the courts *l'avocat de sept heures*, because his harangues were of an almost interminable length. He is one of the orators of the communes now, and gains his forty sous a day by making speeches in favour of patriotism and the guillotine.' At this moment the room was thrown into confusion by a fight which ensued between the gentleman with the shirt and the drunken priest. Le Franc rose suddenly, and said 'I think I have told you enough about these worthy persons; and now let us retire, which we can do without being noticed.'

"We immediately quitted the cabaret, and, as soon as we had reached a part of the street where no one was passing, Le Franc said 'I have authority to arrest you.'

"'I am sorry to hear it,' I replied, 'but, if you will do so, you must; I have no means of resisting you, and, probably, if I had, resistance would be of no use.'

"'Let us suppose I should not,' said he; 'what is to become of you?—How can you remain concealed in this place?'

"'Really, I know not,' I said, despairingly.

"'Look yonder,' said Le Franc, pointing.

"My eyes followed the direction of his finger, and I saw a building, through the windows of which lights were visible.

"'There,' he continued, 'the Committee of

Public Safety is at this moment sitting; and, if I should carry you thither, your existence would not be so long as that of the candles which are now burning.'

"'Well,' I said, in the tone and with the feeling of perfect despair, 'I can die but once.'

"'Nothing is more true than that,' he replied; 'all mankind agree that we can die but once; but there is a great difference of opinion respecting the time when that event shall take place. But now, helpless as you are, tell me, what madness has induced you thus to provoke your fate?—why did you leave that asylum in which you were at least secure?'

"'I was tired of my prison,' I replied.

"'That I can believe; but I don't think you will like any better to be guillotined.'

"This was true, and I could not now deny it.

"'Come,' continued Le Franc, 'I have promised to aid your escape, and I will keep my promise if I can: all that I have said was but for the purpose of showing you the actual extent of your danger, and punishing you a little for the trouble you have given me in looking for you all the day.'

"'And pray,' I said, 'since we are friends, may I ask you to what it is that I am indebted for the interest you have taken in me?'

"'To your being the friend of Mademoiselle

Aubry,' he replied, 'who has preserved my life, and for whom there is nothing that I would not attempt.'

"'And how did she discover that I had left my chamber so soon?' I asked.

"'Really, he said, 'your question gives me a great opinion of your simplicity. Did you suppose that any thing done, or even thought about, by you or by any one else in this town, can escape the lynx eyes of M. Martin, your late neighbour? He sent intelligence of your escape to Mademoiselle Aubry, and she immediately engaged me in your pursuit.'

"'Well, and even now,' I said, 'I am not sure that, with all your good intentions, you can effect my escape from Paris.'

"'Nor am I,' he replied; 'but I will do so if I can. To tell you the truth, I am heartily sick of affairs here, and shall be very glad to change the scene myself. I have procured a commission to raise two companies of volunteers, who are to march for Mentz on this day se'nnight. If we can manage to conceal you until then, I can enrol you in my troop, and you can go with us to the frontier: once there, you may do as you like; desert, if you can and choose, or take up the trade of a soldier, and fight against the real enemies of France; for, however you may dislike the revolutionists, I am sure you cannot love the invaders much.'

"To this I readily assented, and told Le Franc that I should willingly join his ranks.

"'So far, then, all is well,' he replied; 'but where to hide you in the mean time?—You can't return to Mademoiselle Aubry's house: that would not be safe; and it would, moreover, place us too much in the power of that old conjuring cheat, Martin, who, between ourselves, is as great a rascal as any in Paris; and that you may imagine, after the gentlemen you have just left, is saying a great deal for him. I have it,' he added, after a short pause; 'I know a man who will conceal you. Follow me; but, first of all, let me make you like an honest man and a citizen.' He then produced a large tri-coloured cockade, which he fastened into my hat as we walked on.

"We went towards the *Barrière de l'Etoile*, and, turning just before we reached it, we entered the house of a man who supplied a large part of the city with milk. Le Franc introduced me to him as a Jacobin, who had narrowly escaped assassination by some of the agents of the Brissotines.

"'It is necessary,' he added, 'that Monsieur should remain concealed for a short time, until the leaders of that accursed faction shall be guillotined, when their adherents will be too much occupied in looking after their own lives to attempt those of other people.'

"Le Nain, the milkman, had the most un-

bounded veneration for Le Franc, whom he took to be the greatest man and the warmest patriot in France: he therefore readily promised his co-operation, and installed me with great ceremony and secrecy in a granary so well filled, excepting in a space of about four feet square, which he cleared out for me, that it would have defied all search. Le Franc then left me, and here I passed seven days of torment, compared to which death, I am sure, would have been preferable; and, but for that contemptible love of life which 'sicklies o'er' our best and wisest resolutions, I should have embraced my fate. The confinement, and the apprehension I was under, excited again that nervous irritability, under which I had before suffered, to such a degree, that the slightest voices not only alarmed, but actually pained me. That I had some reason to fear you will believe when I tell you that twice were my friend the milkman's premises searched for persons denounced by the Committee of Public Safety; and once, when the soldiers entered the very granary in which I was hidden, a bayonet was thrust through one of the trusses in such a manner that the point passed within an inch of my temples. To move would have been to betray myself and to involve Le Nain in certain destruction: the first I would not have hesitated to do; but, coward as I was, I could not think of the latter without exciting a feeling

strong enough even to overcome my terror. I therefore lay still, and the soldiers soon quitted the granary. My friendly host had taken as much care of me as if I had been the veriest Jacobin that ever cut an honest man's throat. He brought me provisions at night, and used to let me walk up and down his kitchen for a quarter of an hour at a time: to have done so for a longer period, or in a more open place, might have betrayed us both. He had done me a thousand little kindnesses, which showed the man's heart was naturally good; and, if ill luck would have had it so, the bayonet must e'en have gone into my throat before I could have brought so good a fellow into a scrape.

"At length the morning of the eighth day arrived, when, if my safety were not secured, I knew that my release would at all events be certain. Le Franc came to me early with a face full of alarm.

"'We shall be ruined,' said he; 'when the volunteers are drawn out this morning, they will be inspected by three of the deputies. They suspect that you are still in Paris, and they are resolved not to give you a chance of escaping. Your name, and those of two others, will be called out, and you will be marched from the parade to the *Place du Carousel*, where you will be guillotined without a moment's delay,—provided,' he added

after a short pause, 'we cannot deceive them But you do not seem frightened'

"'No,' I said, 'I am frightened at nothing but a longer suspense.'

"'Good!' said he; 'that desperate courage is of the right sort—come along!' He had provided me with a jacket, a military cap, (into which he stuck the cockade he had given me on a former occasion,) a musket, and a bayonet, all of which he made me assume. When we got out he put on an important strut, drew his sword, and, making me fall behind, he marched up to the barracks, which were formed in a sort of court-yard, near the entrance of Les Champs Elysées, whistling *La Carmagnole* with great fervour.

"When we reached the gate the sentinel who was upon duty had laid down his musket, and was fastening his shoe. Le Franc had been praying, if he ever prayed, for some cause of quarrel with this sentinel; and no sooner did he perceive the breach of discipline which the unlucky *factionnaire* was committing, than he darted at him, and, accompanying a dreadful kick with a smart blow from the flat of his sword, he tumbled the poor rogue prostrate on the ground, and literally made him bite the dust. With a thousand imprecations and threats he told him to fall into the ranks; and the soldier, knowing his captain's

humour too well to disobey, seized his musket, and joined the volunteers who were drawn up in the court-yard.

" ' Take his place,' said Le Franc to me aloud; and he added, in a lower tone, ' when the deputies enter, keep your eyes upon your shoe-buckles, and cover your face with your musket as you present arms.'

" I took my post at his bidding, and now felt none of the fear which had overcome me in the granary; for there was a clear sky above me, I had a weapon in my hand, and I knew that, if I must die, I should, at least, not die the death of a dog, nor alone.

" Le Franc inspected his rascals with the air of a general, dealing curses and blows about with admirable profusion. The deputies soon afterwards approached: one of them was a butcher, whom I had attended in the Hotel Dieu when he had been stabbed by his wife in a domestic broil: he looked at me, but, fortunately, did not recognise me, and passed on. Then the oath of allegiance to the republic was administered; and, this done, the names of the three victims, my own being one, were called over. Two of them answered, were marched out of the ranks, and led to execution. The deputies complimented Le Franc on his zeal, and the appearance of his volunteers; and at length I was relieved from the horror of my situation by hearing the order to march

given. Le Franc gave some directions to the soldier he had kicked, and at the same time winked at me. I understood him, and, as the troops filed out of the gate, I took the place of the sentinel in the ranks, and he resumed his post.

"As we approached the barrier I saw a crowd of women, at whose appearance, under any other circumstances than those in which I found myself, I must have laughed. My countrymen, upon too many occasions, prove the justice of the bitter reproach which Voltaire has cast upon them; and even in their most serious enormities they display full as much of the monkey as of the tiger. These women were all, or nearly all, of the very lowest part of the community. The market porters, and those women who go about the streets picking out with crooked nails the unregarded trifles which lie in the kennels, stood among them, ragged, squalid, and filthy. *Poissardes* and *Les Dames des Halles* were there also, making an odd contrast with their vulgar finery to the not less ostentatious wretchedness of the others; and common prostitutes, and inexplicable wretches of all kinds, who were as much a disgrace to human nature as to the sex to which they belonged, made up the number. Nearly all of them were stained with the wet blood of some recent execution, and their appearance was at once horrible and ridiculous.

"When we came nearer I saw that Mademoiselle Aubry was at their head: she was thinly dressed in a theatrical costume, bearing a lance in her hand, on the top of which was the *bonnet rouge*. She represented the goddess Liberty, and awaited the volunteers at the gate, to animate their courage. As we passed she began a revolutionary song, to which the women of her party and the soldiers sang a chorus. The latter, I remember, was in these words:

> 'Vous, qui faites tant de victimes,
> Enemis de l'egalité,
> Recevez le prix de vos crimes;
> Et nous aurons la liberté.'

"While she was singing she threw a branch of poplar at Le Franc, and tossed to each of the soldiers smaller twigs from a basket which one of the women held. When I came up to her she stuck a sprig in the button-hole of my coat, at the same time thrusting something into my bosom, and accompanying this with a significant gesture, by which she enjoined my silence. I obeyed; for to have spoken to, or to have appeared to recognise her, would, at this moment, have been highly dangerous; and, after the narrow escapes I had lately experienced, I had just begun to think that my life was worth preserving. I therefore passed quickly on: we marched from Paris, and this was the last time I ever saw her.

When we halted I found an opportunity of examining what she had given me: it was a small purse, containing ten louis d'or, and a note to this effect:

'The two objects which alone bound me to existence are accomplished;—I am revenged, and you are saved. The traitor Mainvielle expired on the scaffold this morning in my sight:—the hand with which I write is still wet with his blood. You are at liberty—may you be happy! I have but to die; and, dying, I beseech you to forget 'ADELAIDE.'

"Mainvielle, with the rest of the Brissotines, had been that day led to execution. I learned that soon after our departure Mademoiselle Aubry was taken ill, and that a violent fever removed her, in a few days, from a world which had long been to her only a scene of grief and horror. I served for three years in the army as a private and a sa non-commissioned officer, during which time Le Franc died in my arms in the field of battle. The enemy were then driven beyond the frontier, and, tranquillity being restored to France, I returned to Paris. I there began to practise as a physician, which I have done ever since with tolerable success; and you may believe me when I tell you that I never reflect, without the most lively gratitude and wonder, upon the chance which

saved me from the fate of so many of my countrymen."

Soon after M. Montmorin had concluded his tale we rang for our chamber candles, and, after breakfasting together the next morning, we bade each other farewell.

It was now Harry Beville's turn to tell a tale; and, as soon as the compliments which it was thought to deserve had been paid to the apothecary's story, Harry was called upon to begin.

He had been out of the room a short time before, and, on his return, I perceived that he brought with him one of those little ugly books which are often found on the shelves of an antiquary. It was bound in vellum, with red edges to the leaves, and the covers were held together with two massy and curiously chased clasps. I never in the whole course of my life saw a more unpromising looking book. If I had not known the particular bent of Harry's reading I should have thought that it was a collection of homilies, or a treatise on divinity by one of the fathers, so solemn and grave an air had this little book.

My cousin Harry, however, soon put an end to the conjectures I was endeavoring to form.

"When it was first proposed," he said, "to tell tales, I recollected that I had in my *sac* a collection of some of the most amusing that have ever fallen in my way; and I must confess that I have indulged in such reading more, perhaps, than I ought to have done, and certainly much more to

my amusement than to my profit. You, my dear grandmother," he added, turning to the old lady, " will forgive me for preferring Boccaccio to the ' Statutes at Large,' although you never read one of the latter; wherefore, as the Prince of Denmark has it, ' is your estate the more gracious!' and, although you know nothing of the charms of legal pursuits, you will believe that they are not so captivating as wholly to engross one's attention."

" I never knew you at a loss for some pretence to excuse that vagrant temper which leads you from the studies you ought to pursue to those more agreeable, but less useful ones, by which you will never gain a straw.—But, come, let us know to what this apologetic exordium tends."

" I assure you, my dear madam," he replied, " that I bow with as much humility as gratitude to your reproof. I will not even stop to remind you of the story my mother tells of an old lady who once set fire to her night-cap when she was reading in her bed-room, after all the family besides had gone to rest. I will not even insinuate that there is only one person who wears such high-crowned night-caps as could by any possibility catch fire. I will"——

" You are an ungracious boy," said the old lady, reddening a little; (for the story of the high-crowned caps always made her somewhat angry, if, indeed, so kind and gentle a temper as

hers ever felt what can properly be called anger;) "but, come," she added, recovering her good humour in an instant, and laughing as she patted Harry's cheek, "let us know what you are going to extract from that old-fashioned little book."

"Well, then," said Harry, "this volume contains the tales of (to my thinking) one of the most amusing of the numerous host of Italian novelists—I mean the worthy Giovan Francesco Straparola. I know that he is not held in the greatest reputation by some of the critics, and it may be true that many of his best stories are not original; but his manner of relating them is very delightful. I am sure I should be the most ungrateful soul alive if I did not pay him all the encomiums I think he deserves; for, whether original or not, I have enjoyed his tales as much as those of any of his cotemporaries, always excepting that great master and prince of story-tellers, the inimitable Boccaccio. Straparola calls his collection '*Tredici Piacevolissime Notti,*' and well is it worthy of that title. It has enabled me to pass several nights in the highest degree *piacevolmente,* when they would otherwise have been dreary enough. He is, besides, the great father of those fairy tales which the French authors poured out in such abundance, and which first began to appear about a century after the publication of this volume. You are none of you smitten with the true bibliomania, or I could

command your veneration by merely showing you my book, and could make you fall down with as much alacrity and veneration as good Catholics feel at the sight of an indubitable relic of some of the early saints of their Church. Our good friend the attorney is an antiquary in his way, but then his are all local attachments; he loves topographical antiquities alone, and, I dare say, would as soon have one of the editions of 1664 as this, the real *editio princeps*, of which I am the fortunate and enviable possessor."

"You guess quite rightly," said the attorney; "but, although I don't value the date of the book, I should like to know what it contains."

"So should we all," said Elizabeth, "and Harry may keep his speech for some other occasion."

"I knew you had not the true relish for the real beauties of antiquity," said Harry; who did not like to be stopped in his harangue. Almost every possessor of a rare book, or indeed of any other article, becomes eloquent in its praise; and the first edition of the '*Piacevolissime Notti*' was certainly both valuable and rare, as Harry had been convinced by the price which a knowing book-dealer of London had made him pay for it.

"Leaving, however, the merits of my acquisition," he continued, "I must describe to you the manner in which Straparola introduces his stories, and which, I think, is not the least agreeable part of his book.

"He alludes to the misfortunes of civil commotion and unsuccessful warfare, by which Ottaviano Maria Sforza, Duke of Milan, was driven from that principality, and compelled to take refuge in Lodi. The duke's daughter, Lucretia, the widow of Giovanni Francesco Gonzaga, of the house of Mantua, hastened to the place of her father's retirement, to alleviate, by her filial affection, the sorrows of his declining years, and of the reverses to which he was exposed.

"The illustrious exile, finding that at Lodi he was not safe from the malicious practices of his enemies, collected together such wealth in jewels and money as he had been able to save from the wreck of his fortune, and went to Venice with his daughter, to whom, as she was a widow, and without children, her place of residence was wholly indifferent, provided that it enabled her to discharge her duty to her parent.

"After residing in the city of Venice, for a short time, in the house of the renowned Ferriere Beltramo, a gentleman not less remarkable for his high and ancient lineage than for his personal valour, his courtesy, and his honorable mind, the duke found a palazzo on the neighboring island of Murano, which was exactly suited for himself and his family. The situation of this mansion was the most agreeable that can be imagined. It was entirely surrounded by gardens, laid out in exquisite taste, and plentifully stocked with the

rich and various fruit-trees and flowers which abound in that genial climate. Numerous fountains, which were always playing, cooled the air; and the incessant and harmonious noise of the falling waters fell like a wild low music on the senses. Statues of rare workmanship were judiciously placed in the grove, and added to the delusions of the enchanting spot by seeming to people it with the old Arcadian deities, of which it might have been the worthy abode.

"The palazzo was of most spacious dimensions: it contained a magnificent hall and lofty and elegant chambers, and was approached by a very beautiful marble staircase. Among its other advantages was an extensive balcony, from which the prospect was of the most picturesque and agreeable description: it commanded the whole of the gardens, a view of the bright blue sea beyond, and the scene was terminated by the stupendous city of Venice, which reposed in calm majesty on the ocean, while its towers and spires seemed to seek the heavens.

"To this charming residence the fugitive duke repaired with his daughter and the whole of his establishment, and in its delightful retirement forgot the sorrows with the cares of sovereignty.

"The Lady Lucretia, by whose persuasions her father had been chiefly induced to make the purchase of this place, found nothing in it more delightful than the balcony I have just men-

tioned. Here she used to sit in the morning and in the evening of every day, enjoying the cool breezes, which at those times brought health and freshness from the waves of the Adriatic, and viewing the delightful and ever-varying prospect which the sea afforded her.

"By way of passing her time more agreeably, as well as for the purpose of forming such an establishment as befitted her state (having been deserted by those ladies who, in her more brilliant fortunes, had vowed to devote themselves to her for ever,) she engaged ten young ladies, fair, virtuous, and witty, to be her companions.

"Messer Giovan himself says that it would take up too much time if he should recount all the charms of these personages, and he therefore gives only a very short sketch of each of them: I shall, however, spare you even his catalogue of their beauties, begging you, at the same time, to believe that each of them was very rich in personal as well as in mental accomplishments. There were also two matronly ladies, whose good sense and good counsel were to govern their more youthful companions.

"To this agreeable and elegant society, says Straparola, many noble and learned gentlemen resorted; among whom were Il Casal Bolognese, but I declare to you I don't know who my author means by this person, although he describes him further as the king of England's

ambassador; the learned Pietro Bembo, afterwards the cardinal, but who, at this period, was only the commander of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem at Rhodes; the Vangelista of the citizens of Milan, a very able man, and one possessing great weight with the seignory of Venice. Bernardo Capello, a renowned versifier, was also a frequent visitor; together with the *amoroso* Antonio Bembo; the amiable Benedetto Trivigiano; the facetious Antonio Molino, or, as he was sometimes called, Burchiello; the courtly Ferier Beltramo; and many other gentlemen, whose names I cannot tell you, because the Italian says it would be tedious *(noioso)* to recount them; and therefore he leaves them out.

"These gentlemen and ladies were in the practice of making themselves agreeable to each other, and of consuming the evenings in various amusements, such as dancing, lively conversation, music, and singing; beguiled by which sports the fleeting hours glided rapidly away.

"One evening, when there remained but few of those days preceding the carnival, which in Italy are wholly devoted to pleasure, the Lady Lucretia commanded, under pain of incurring her displeasure, that the whole of the company then present, and which consisted of the persons I have named, should meet again in the balcony on the following evening, in order to hear, and to obey, if they saw fit, a proposition which she

intended to submit to them for passing all the evenings between that day and the carnival. Every one, of course, promised to attend; and all of them kept their promise, as people are apt to do when it suits exactly with their inclination.

"The signora then proposed, in a short, eloquent, and lady-like speech, which was delivered with such a winning gravity that it ensured, without commanding, obedience, that the order of the evening's entertainments should be as follows:—In the first place there was to be a dance; afterwards five of the ladies should sing in concert some canzonet of their own composition; and, this being finished, that they should each of them tell a story—the order of their narrations to be determined by lot: that at the end of every story should be given an enigma, to be guessed at by the whole company; and, this disposed of, that they should all retire to rest.

"The lady's proposal was carried unanimously, and, as we should say now, by acclamation: a gold vase was then brought, at the sight of which, I am sure, my dear grandmother's work-box would blush; and, the lots having been deposited in it, that which bore the first number was drawn by the blooming Lauretta. She was crowned with a garland of laurel, as the queen of the sports, and after a dance the story-telling began.

"Among these stories is that which I now propose to read to you, in compliance with the law which has been agreed to by all present; and I must be permitted to add that this story appears to me to be not only original, but in the highest degree pathetic. It tells of the fate of two lovers, and of an instance of savage inhumanity, which was unfortunately too common to excite surprise, and still less horror, in the country and at the time when it was perpetrated. It is, perhaps, impossible to ascertain, and certainly it is not worth while to inquire, whether the story of Hero and Leander formed any part of the foundation of this tale. Its termination is far more tragical than that of the Greek poem, and the incidents which are introduced add to its interest, as I think, in a very remarkable degree. I shall read it exactly as I find it in the text, preserving the meaning of the Italian as nearly as possible, and of course neither adding to nor diminishing it myself. The style you will find, like that of all Straparola's countrymen and contemporaries, simple and severe, without any other ornaments than the pathos of the story furnishes. Some of those who may hear it may dissent from the uncivil and injurious things which are said, in the beginning of the story, against a passion which every body bows to, and some have no reason to quarrel with. In order to bring my friend Straparola off, I must there-

fore explain that the story which I am about to read is one of a series, the object of which is to show the miserable consequences which Love brings upon his votaries, and that the author tells it with the amiable intention of guarding his readers against the fatal effects of that passion."

Harry then opened his book, and began to read.

MALGHERITA SPOLETINA.

The Student's Tale.

If she loved rashly, her life paid for wrong—
A heavy price must all pay who thus err
In some shape; let none think to fly the danger,
For soon or late Love is his own avenger.

Don Juan.

MALGHERITA SPOLETINA.

[Malgherita Spoletina falls in love with Theodore, and, swimming across an arm of the sea by night to visit him, is discovered by her brothers, who afterwards deceive her by setting up a light, and thus draw her into the main ocean, where she is most unhappily drowned.—*Le Notti di Straparola, Nott. VII. Fav.* 2.]

Love, as I find it very judiciously described by the wisest men, is nothing more than an irrational desire springing from a violent passion; and this passion is induced in the human heart by too warm imaginations. Its disastrous consequences are the waste of worldly riches, the consumption of life and strength, the deprivation of

intellect, and the loss of liberty. There is in it neither reason nor regularity, nor stability. It is the parent of many vices, a scourge to young hearts, and death to old ones; and seldom or never does it lead to a good and happy termination. This was particularly remarkable in the case of a young lady of the house of Spoletina, who, under the influence of this fatal power, most unhappily and prematurely ended her existence.

Ragusa, most worthy ladies, is a very famous city of Dalmatia: it is seated on the sea-shore, and at a short distance from it is an island called L'Isola di Mezo, upon which stands a strong and well-furnished castle. Between Ragusa and this castle there is a dry and barren rock, of very small dimensions, on which nothing is to be seen but a miserable hovel, scarcely serving to keep out the weather. The inconvenience and insalubrity of this rock were such, that no person could be found to inhabit it but a young monk, who was called Theodore. He was a devout and holy man, and kept a small shrine of the Blessed Virgin in his cabin, whither the sailors and fishermen of the surrounding places used to bring their scanty offerings. Theodore lived on this rock, employed in prayer and pious mortifications. He was so wholly destitute that he had not the means of supporting existence; and he used to visit alternately Ragusa and the island of Mezo, to solicit charity.

It happened that one day, when Theodore had gone to the latter place to seek his daily bread by begging, according to his ordinary custom, a circumstance befell him such as he could never have expected. A young and beautiful maiden, whose name was Malgherita, saw him, and, being struck with his person, which was manly and elegant, and with the wretchedness of his condition, which was enough to move the pity of any tender heart, she became enamoured of him, and thought it was unfit that so charming a young man as he seemed in her eyes should spend his days in sorrow and solitude. The fair Malgherita suffered these thoughts to take possession of her bosom so entirely, that she thought of nothing but Theodore by night or by day.

He, who as yet knew nothing of the impression he had made, continued to carry on his necessary trade of begging, and often went, among other places, to Malgherita's house to implore charity.

Malgherita, upon all these occasions, gave him alms, although she did not dare to discover the passion she felt for him.

But Love, who soon becomes the tyrant of all who put on his seemingly gentle yoke, urged her to disclose her affection, and prompted her to address Theodore in the following manner:

"Theodore, my brother, and the only joy of my heart, so strong is the passion which con-

sumes me, that, unless you take pity on me, my life will soon be at an end. I can resist it no longer; and if, therefore, you would not cause my death, tell me that your love for me equals mine for you."

A burst of bitter and scalding tears followed this passionate declaration.

Theodore, who had never imagined that he was likely to inspire any one with love, was thunderstruck at this news, and remained mute with astonishment. He, however, soon recovered himself, and, replying to the lady, he displayed as much ardour as she herself had expressed. There were, however, so many obstacles in the way of their indulging their passion, that he was full of despair, and he represented them forcibly, and with great sorrow, to the maiden.

She, who was of a lively invention, replied—

"Do not doubt, my love, but that I will show you a way by which we shall overcome all the difficulties which beset us. It shall be thus:—At the fourth hour of the night you shall set up a light in the window of your cabin, and, as soon as I see it, I will hasten to join you."

"But how is that possible?" said Theodore. "How can you, a timid and tender girl, pass across the sea? You know that neither you nor I have a boat; and you know, too, that, if we had, so rapid is the current between this island and the rock on which I dwell, that the attempt to row

across would probably cost your life, and must certainly be discovered."

"Fear not," she replied; "leave the whole affair to me, and I will find a way of coming to you without putting my life or my honour in peril, and without the smallest danger to you. When you put up the light I will plunge into the sea, and swim over to your rock. This I can do with great ease, and without the possibility of being discovered."

"Indeed," cried Theodore, "you mistake the dangers which you will have to encounter. Your strength is not sufficient to hold out so great a distance; you will fail, and die in the attempt."

"I am not afraid," she replied, "and I am bent upon doing it. I know my own strength, and I can swim like a fish."

Theodore endeavored to dissuade the maiden from a resolution which he thought little better than madness; but in vain. He was at length obliged to promise that he would comply with her directions; and they then parted.

The night being come, he set up the light as she had directed him; and, preparing every thing for her reception, he went to the edge of the rock to wait her coming.

As soon as Malgherita saw the light, for which she had been waiting in all the anxiety of that passion which absorbed her whole soul, she began to put her resolution in practice. She divested

herself of the greater part of her clothes, retaining only such a garment as would not impede the motion of her limbs in swimming, and then, plunging into the sea, she boldly breasted its tide. She had not overrated her expertness in this exercise, for which the women of Dalmatia are famous, and in less than a quarter of an hour she reached the rock.

Theodore received her in his arms, and bore her to his humble dwelling, where, kneeling before the Virgin's shrine, they implored her blessing. In the sight of Heaven, and accompanying their oath with the solemnities prescribed by their religion, they swore to be true to each other while their lives should endure.

No human eye witnessed this marriage: the stars of Heaven alone looked on, and the favoring darkness wrapped the wedded lovers from the sight of the world.

Before the dawn they tore themselves from each other's arms, and Malgherita went back to the castle on the island as she had left it, and reached her chamber undiscovered. As often as the close of the day came did she again swim to the barren rock, which was now a paradise to her; and here she passed the long nights in the society of her beloved Theodore.

At length it happened that, as she was swimming to the rock one night, a fog arose, which prevented her from seeing the light quite clearly.

and drove her out of her course, so that she was seen by some fishermen, who were pursuing their occupation. At first they took her for a large fish; but, looking more closely, they found she was a woman, and they then watched her until she reached the rock, where they saw her land, and enter Theodore's cabin. This, however, did not diminish their astonishment. They staid near the rock until she returned; and then, marking the course she took homeward, they rowed after her, and, in spite of all her precautions, they discovered who she was.

These poor fellows at first had no intention of betraying the secret with which they had thus accidentally become acquainted; but afterwards, when they came to discuss the matter, and to think of the disgrace which must ultimately be brought upon a respectable family if it were not put a stop to, as well as of the nightly peril in which the young girl's life was placed, they resolved they would disclose all that they knew. They therefore went to the house of Malgherita, and, asking to see her brothers, the fishermen told the young men every particular that they had seen.

The brothers heard this fatal intelligence with great emotion. At first they could not believe it, and proposed, before they gave credit to it, that they should have the evidence of their own eyes; but, after examining again the fishermen, and

making inquiries in their own house, they were too well convinced of its truth in all respects. They then consulted together as to the best means of putting their unhappy sister to death without delay, but in such a manner as to conceal the disgrace which she had brought upon their name. At length they agreed upon an expedient, which was immediately put in execution.

The youngest of the three brothers at nightfall got into a boat, and rowed quickly, and as if clandestinely, to the rock where Theodore dwelt. When he arrived there he told the hermit who he was, and besought him to give him a lodging for the night, alleging, as a reason for his request, that he had been engaged in an affair which had terminated unfortunately; that, for the share he had taken in it, his life was forfeited to the laws of the land; and that, if he should be seized, he must inevitably die.

Theodore, who was delighted with an opportunity of being useful to a brother of Malgherita's, received him with the utmost cordiality. He put before him the best fare his hovel afforded, and sat up the whole of the night conversing with him.

In the mean time, and while the younger brother wholly occupied the attention of Theodore, the other two, as soon as the night had quite closed in, went out of their house secretly, and,

embarking on board a small sailing-boat, having first provided themselves with a torch, they directed their course towards the rock. When they reached it they made fast the boat, and then fixed the light they had brought with them to the top of the mast in such a manner that it was sure to be seen by their hapless sister, whom they had left on the island of Mezo.

Their design succeeded ;—the courageous girl, as soon as she saw the accustomed signal of the light, threw herself boldly into the sea, and swam towards it.

The brothers, upon hearing the noise which Malgherita's swimming made in the water, loosened their boat, and, taking up their oars, they rowed slowly and silently from the rock towards the main sea, the light still being fixed up against the mast.

The luckless girl, who, owing to the darkness of the night, could see nothing but the light, which to her had always, hitherto, been a favoring as well as a guiding star, followed it without hesitation, and did not perceive that it changed its place. The brothers, in the mean time, never ceased to row on ; and their vessel proceeded as steadily and as fatally as the footsteps of Death. At length, having arrived at the deep ocean, they on a sudden extinguished the torch.

Malgherita, when she lost sight of the light, was in utter confusion and despair : she did not

know where she was, or what she could do; her strength began to fail, from the long exercise she had taken; and, finding she was far beyond the reach of any human help, she abandoned herself to her evil destiny, and her delicate body was swallowed up, like a wrecked vessel, by the remorseless and devouring sea.

The elder brothers, satisfied with the result of their savage scheme, returned home to the island. The youngest, when the day appeared, repeated his thanks to Theodore for the asylum he had afforded him, and departed soon afterwards. The news was spread about, first through the castle, and afterwards all over the island, that Malgherita Spoletina was nowhere to be found. The hypocritical and sanguinary brothers affected to be greatly afflicted at this event, which they had themselves caused, and at which they were infinitely rejoiced.

On the third day after this most unhappy lady's fatal death her body was cast by the sea upon Theodore's rock. The wretched man was walking along the narrow shore, meditating, and endeavoring to guess what fatal accident had deprived him of his tender Malgherita, when her dead body was washed to his feet. The moment his eyes fell upon it he recognised it, and his horror was so great as almost to deprive him of life.

At length, summoning up his courage as well

as he was able, he took hold of the inanimate body, and drew it out of the water, and carried it into his hovel. His grief now became uncontrollable; he cast himself upon the corpse, and kissed the pale lips, lamenting and mourning, while the rapid tears fell from his eyes upon her heavenly bosom, as white—and now as cold—as the mountain snow. He called upon her in vain, and the echo of his desolate abode repeated his passionate exclamations.

When his grief (by being indulged unchecked) had spent itself, he thought of the necessity of performing the last rites of sepulture to his beloved Malgherita. He took the spade with which he usually labored in his little garden, and dug a grave near his hovel: then, with many tears, he closed those eyes and that mouth—once his greatest joy and pride, now dimmed and cold in death—and made a garland of roses and violets, which he put upon her head. This being done, he kissed her for the last time, laid her in the grave and covered her with earth.

"There," said Harry, as he closed his book, "my story is at an end; and I see, by the redness of some of the eyes about me, that it has had its usual effect."

"It is a very melancholy, but, at the same time, I think, a very disagreeable story," said Elizabeth.

"I think so too," said the attorney; "and, although I have no objection to people's indulging their feelings in any way they like, I am almost vexed at seeing them cry at this tale."

"Why so?" asked Harry.

"Because I think that neither Malgherita nor Theodore, in their own characters, ought to excite one's sympathy. The one is a bold virago; and the other is a rogue and vagabond, who lives on a rock for the purpose of extorting money from charitably-disposed persons. The young lady falls in love with him in a manner perfectly unheard of, and swims to him every night in such a way as is at least improbable, if not something more."

"Oh! if it is only the improbability you complain of, I should not value your objections in this respect so highly as I do in general. You forget that the scene is laid at a time when the man-

ners and customs of society were very different from those of the present day; and Dalmatia, you know, was not a very refined place. But, though manners change, human beings and human passions remain still the same. You do not object to the improbability of the tale of Hero and Leander; and yet the strait at Ragusa, where the action of my story passes, is much narrower than the Hellespont; while *my* lady has only to swim half of that diminished distance. But the real ground of your objection, I believe, is the homeliness of the characters: this I take to be the great art of the story-teller. He has been able, out of very rude materials, to make a tale which draws the tears from any one who hears it, and has continued to do so for now nearly three hundred years. Even you can't deny that I saw you steal the back of your hand across your eyes, towards the end of the story; and they look a little watery even now."

"Pshaw!" said the attorney, "I have a bad cold."

"No matter," said Harry, "I maintain that the plot is a good plot. A modern romance-writer, with a dash of his pen, would so dress up the hero and the heroine, that you should confess they were quite delightful people: even Elizabeth herself would not have a word to say against them; and you, who now abuse, would be the first to pity and praise them. I contend again that this tale contains the mate-

rials for one of the most affecting and powerful tales of star-crossed passion that ever I read in my life; and for this reason I am obliged to vindicate my little friend in the vellum binding."

"It is, as you say, Harry," interposed my grandmother, "a very pathetic story; and, although I by no means agree with you in the very warm praises you have lavished upon Straparola—whose works I know very well, though I have not so rare an edition as you have been boasting of—I am ready to confess that this tale alone would exempt him from the censures he often deserves. The last part is exquisitely touching; I mean from Theodore's discovering the body of his mistress—his lamentations over her—the incident of his preparing her grave—his closing her eyes and mouth—his making a garland of violets and roses, and then kissing her as he lays the body in the grave and covers it—are as powerful and as moving as any I remember, excepting, perhaps, the catastrophe of the old ballad of the 'Children in the Wood.'—But, however, to leave this for a moment, let me ask you, Harry, if you really mean to offer this as your story."

"Oh, certainly I do," replied Harry; "and I shall not be quite certain, until I have heard the whole company out, that it is not the best we shall have."

"We will not lose time in debating this point," said my grandmother; "but I shall at once put it

to the vote whether to read a story from a book can be called a compliance with the regulations we have all agreed to."

"By no means," cried every one present; for the prospect of making Harry tell two stories instead of one was universally agreeable.

It was in vain that he remonstrated upon the ground that a translation was as good as an original story: he was unanimously condemned, and his judges were too much interested in the doom to relax a jot of their sentence.

"As you are not quite ready to begin, perhaps," said my grandmother, "and as it is my turn next, I will go on; and in the mean time you may prepare. I cannot, however, resist this opportunity of pointing out to you another illustration of a maxim I have often endeavored to enforce upon you—that 'lazy folks always take the most pains.'"

The old lady then began as follows: —

THE OLD GREY CLOAK.

My Grandmother's Tale.

My cloake it was a very good cloake,
  Itt hath beene always true to the weare;
But now it is not worth a groat—
  I have had it four-and-forty yeare.

Old Song.

THE OLD GREY CLOAK.

THE bells of the little city of Birling did not ring every day, nor upon any but really important occasions. The cause which produced so merry a peal from them at the period when this tale begins was nothing less than the election of a new magistrate.

M. Wiesel, upon whom the civic promotion had just been conferred, was a practitioner of the law, and had, by the regularity of his conduct for some years, commanded the respect of his fellow-citizens. The moment had at length arrived when he was to reap the reward of his meritorious exertions, and to receive an unequivocal mark of the esteem of his neighbours, by being elected a member of the senatorial body by which the affairs of the city were governed. It is true Birling was one of the very smallest cities of one of the very smallest provinces of

Germany: but still it was a city, and its senate was composed of real senators; and as it is something to be a senator of a city, though it be never so small a one, the advocate was highly delighted at this accession to his consequence.

The choice of the council had just been announced, and the worthy burgher who had the custody of the bell-tower had set his myrmidons to work, in anticipation of the bounty of the new senator, whose success he thus loudly published to the world, or, to speak at once more modestly and more properly, to the good folks of the city of Birling. The council was breaking up; and the steps of the town-hall were covered by the worthy politicians of the burgh, who, according to their various opinions or interests, approved or censured the election of their superiors.

M. Wiesel went home in that sort of comfortable good temper which, when their wishes are accomplished, is apt to be generated even in the minds of men who are not always amiable. He announced his new rank to his gentle and handsome wife with more urbanity than he was wont to display. Before she had time either to reply or to congratulate him upon this event, which was only agreeable to her because she saw that it gave him pleasure, the town-clerk entered the room.

Waldau was one of the kindest and most single-hearted creatures in the whole world. He

had been M. Wiesel's schoolfellow, and had lived with him, from the days of their boyhood to the present time, on terms of the strictest and most familiar acquaintance. Now, however, that M. Wiesel had become a senator, while he remained only a town-clerk, poor Waldau thought that affairs were very much altered. He knew too well what belonged to the dignity of the office to fail in any of the respect which was due to a senator; and he approached him to pay, in what he considered the most polite and proper manner, his congratulations to his new superior.

"How d'ye do, Waldau?" said the senator, with a patronising air.

Waldau replied with a speech which he had prepared for the occasion, the half of which, at least, was composed of law terms and technical phrases.

"And after all this, Waldau," said M. Wiesel, "sit down, and let us taste some wine. Commendations, as my father used to say, make one's throat insufferably dry."

"Many thanks to you," replied Waldau, "but at present I must decline your hospitality: time presses; to-morrow, at day-break, *ante lucem*, I must away to the *residenz*, whither I am sent on business for the city. Will *your worship* honour me with any orders or commissions?"

"Of orders, Waldau, it will be time enough

to think when I shall have taken my seat as a senator, and shall have a right to give them: and as to commissions, I think I will not trouble you with any; for though they seem, when they are undertaken, as light as feathers, I know they prove as heavy as lead when they come to be executed."

"But not between old friends, as we are," said Waldau, whose newly-excited respect was wearing off in the warmth of conversation; "no fear that any thing which may serve you can prove burdensome to me."

"Well then," replied the senator, "since you offer so kindly, I think I will trouble you with a letter, which you will oblige me by delivering personally. You are an intelligent person, my dear Waldau; and you will be able to read in the eyes of my brother, to whom this letter is addressed, the answer which he may make to it."

"Your brother! What, Maurice?—is Maurice then alive?" asked the town-clerk, in a joyful tone.

"He is alive," replied Wiesel, coldly; "and, what is more, he is now living at the *residenz*. This same Maurice, of whom we have heard nothing for ten years past, and whom we all thought lay buried in the depths of the ocean, has suddenly come to life—roused, I suppose, by the news of his father's death. He has written to me a long letter full of complaints; the bur-

den of which is, that he is in great distress, and wants money. Now I know the world too well not to see that under this seeming petition for assistance is couched a real claim for what he thinks himself entitled to under a distribution of his father's estate. To this I have to reply, 'It is true, Maurice, that our father is dead, but he has left nothing behind him: it is true that he was thought to possess some property, but, unfortunately, I know not where to find it. Perhaps his habitual distrust may have induced him to conceal it, and his death, which was sudden, prevented him from disclosing the secret of its hiding-place. At all events, Maurice this is a piece of very ill fortune for both of us, and more particularly for you, unless you have reformed your conduct.' In short, Waldau, I have explained to Maurice that our father's death has left me, as well as himself, no richer than we were before; and, for his further satisfaction, I have enclosed him copies of the documents relating to the affair. There they are—the probate, the letters testamentary, the inventory, and all the rest, with which you are as well acquainted as I, or, perhaps, still better, for some of them are in your own handwriting."

"My hand played me false," said Waldau, "if it wrote aught that could give pain to poor Maurice; but yours, senator! yours will not add to his affliction. Come, I know you are a

strict man; I know that you respect and practise forms upon all proper occasions; but I know, too, that you have a kind heart. If you have thought it necessary to lay before your brother a regular statement of your father's testamentary affairs, I am sure you have added some words of consolation—something affectionate, by way of post-script. Come, is it not so, senator?"

M. Wiesel shook his head.

"Why, zounds, man! then," said Waldau, forgetting, in the warmth of his heart, the dignity of his old friend, "you would not have me the bearer of such a letter to your brother—to poor Maurice. Your brother! he's my brother as well. Did we not grow up together? have we not laughed together, cried together, learnt our lessons together, played truant together, and been flogged together?—nay, more, have we not been flogged for each other?"

The town-clerk's voice faltered, and his eyes filled with tears, as the memory of his youthful friendship for poor Maurice came into his mind, along with a thousand other tender recollections.

Madame Wiesel, who had at first smiled at Waldau's vehemence, now wept also. Maurice had always been her favorite; the severity of his father, the old M. Wiesel, had driven him from home, in consequence of some youthful irregularities, neither so many nor so heinous as to deprive him of the affection of his friends, in

which number were included all the young people of the town. Madame's heart was stored with kindly feelings, and the unlucky but good-hearted Maurice had ever been one of the few persons whom she warmly loved.

To conceal her emotion, and to give a turn to the conversation, which had now become rather painful, and was on a subject which had already occasioned more than one domestic difference between herself and her husband, she asked Waldau how he meant to travel.

Waldau was not sorry to change the subject; and, as he knew of what stern and cold materials the senator's heart was made, he regretted that his feelings had betrayed him into any emotion. "Yonder," said he, with an ironical gravity, "stands my travelling chariot;" and he pointed to the post-house which stood opposite to the window, and in the front of which was a long covered waggon. "That is the conveyance, at once swift and convenient, by which I am to perform my journey to the *residenz*. You smile: why, surely, you would not have me travel post—me, whose poverty is at least as well known as my name—when the senators themselves do not indulge in the luxury of posting. Besides, I am going on an errand which requires a modest style of travelling. My business is to procure the reduction of a tax which our miserable town cannot afford to pay."

"That same poverty seems indeed to be the common lot of us all. But you, my poor Waldau, are still more to be pitied, on account of the large family of relations who depend entirely on you for support; and, now that your proposed marriage with the councillor's niece is broken off"——

"Ah! no more of that, I beseech you, dear Madame: spare my feelings. To be jilted is a man's fate, but he does not like always to be told of it. I am forgetting her very rapidly, I assure you."

"That's easily said, Waldau," cried the senator, "and I don't blame you for putting a good face upon your disappointment; but I think you won't forget her fortune so soon as the fickle fair." As he spoke he looked rather maliciously at Waldau's threadbare coat, some of the buttons of which had been as faithless as his mistress, and had deserted it. The poor town-clerk's coat was, in fact, one of that sort at which every man who wears a better has a prescriptive right to sneer.

Madame interposed her gentle voice. "Dear Waldau," said she, "I hope your travelling dress is thicker and better than this: the north wind, which has just set in from the mountains, will cut through a coat like yours."

"Really," replied Waldau, "I don't mind, among friends, confessing the scantiness of my

wardrobe; and, to tell the truth, this is the only coat I have in the world. I had a cloak, but I have given it to my poor old grandmother, who is confined to her arm-chair with the rheumatism, and who stood in great need of something warm to wrap her old bones in. Egad, I am going to set off in a plight almost as bare as in that which the prodigal son returned."

Waldau said this with an attempt at a smile, but it was hardly a successful one. It goes against the grain sadly to cut jokes at the expense of one's own and only coat; and, truth to tell, Waldau's was a coat which would not bear joking in such weather. It might do well enough to excite a laugh in the summer, if it had been seen in the serviceable employment of scaring the crows from a corn-field; but enveloping a human body at mid-winter, in one of the coldest parts of Germany, Heaven knows it was enough to make one's teeth chatter to look at it.

There was nothing of which Waldau stood more in need at this moment than a cloak: Madame Wiesel thought so too.

"Dear Philip," she said to her husband, in a persuasive tone, "pray lend him your cloak."

"Indeed you must excuse me," replied the senator; "the north wind will spare me no more than it will our friend. There is an old cloak of my father's somewhere up stairs, which I will go and seek; for, if he goes to Felsenbourg without

some better covering, he will be petrified by the time he reaches the *residenz;* and, instead of procuring the remission of our taxes, he will be shut up in the museum as a curiosity."

"This old mantle," he continued, addressing Waldau, "is warm and large; and although it is not very smart, and has a great many patches, you will find it keep out the cold, perhaps, better than a more showy one. When you have done with it at Felsenbourg, give it to Maurice in my name; it may be useful to him, and in any event, its patches and homeliness will remind him of his father's wise parsimony, and may serve as a wholesome lesson to him."

M. Wiesel, having finished this *tirade*, quitted the room to look for the cloak which had inspired him.

Waldau did not attempt to conceal from Madame Wiesel the pain which her husband's inhuman behaviour to his brother had occasioned to him.

"The senator is wrong, indeed," he said; "and if Maurice had no more consideration he might give him some trouble. I don't wish to vex you, Mary—God forbid that I should; but I assure you that this case of your father-in-law's property comes under that description which the Romans call the *Res Mancipi;* and the learned Cornelius Bynkershoeck, the flower of juris-consults, expressly lays down in his treatise '*De Origine Juris,*'

in support of which he also quotes Cap. LXX. of the Digest '*De Heredibus*,' that"——

Madame interrupted his learned harangue, of which she knew she could not comprehend a word, even though Bynkershoeck himself had come to explain it to her. "Never mind, Waldau," she said—"never mind the law of the case; but let me beg of you to communicate to Maurice the news of his brother's unkindness in as gentle a manner as you can. I beseech you to console him as much as possible. Poor Maurice! tell him that my hands are tied—that I can do nothing but weep over his fate, and pray for him."

"I will tell him so," replied Waldau, "and I warrant the news of thy kindness and good wishes will do him more good than his brother's brutality will do him harm. He must be altered indeed if the loss of fortune can make him unhappy."

The senator entered with the cloak, which Waldau received very thankfully, notwithstanding its odd fashion and party-coloured appearance. He then bade adieu to M. Wiesel and his good wife, and retired to prepare for his departure.

The next morning, at day-break, Waldau deposited himself in the clumsy vehicle, which, for want of a better, was to carry him to Felsenbourg, the seat of the administration of the province. This carriage was a covered waggon, heavy and

incommodious, compared to which even a French diligence, odious as that is, was a desirable conveyance. It was more commonly used for the carriage of merchandise than of human beings; and on the present occasion Waldau found that his only fellow-passengers consisted of huge and heavy packages. The waggon was lighted by a narrow opening, at the end towards the horses. Two antique curtains of oiled leather, and the body of the driver, closed up this aperture, and let in only so much air as was absolutely necessary for respiration. Waldau was a spare man, and very sensible of cold: he had, besides, a great aversion to bad tobacco; and the driver had a pipe, nearly as large as his boot, filled with some of the most detestable quality of that most detestable weed, the fume of which the wind drove pitilessly into the face of the town-clerk of Birling. He, however, stretched himself upon the luggage with which the waggon was filled, and soon fell into a profound sleep, from which neither the roughness of the road, nor the occasional stoppnig of the waggon when the driver paused to vary the dryness of his pipe with a *schnapp*, awakened him.

At length a sudden jolt, which was followed by a storm of hard knocks on his back and sides, effectually aroused poor Waldau. He found himself dreadfully bruised, and nearly smothered among the boxes and packages. He called as loud as he could, and was with some difficulty

extricated by the driver and his companion from his painful situation. It seemed that the thick-falling snow had so effectually blinded the driver, that he had not been aware of a deep rut in the road, by which one of the wheels was caught, and the waggon thus overturned. When Waldau was drawn from the heap in which he lay buried, he found himself so stiffened and hurt by the hard blows he had endured as to be unable to take any active part in setting the waggon on its wheels again. This task was, however, after some time, effected by the others, who helped Waldau to resume his place; after which the rest of the journey was completed without any further accident.

When they arrived at Felsenbourg, Waldau, although he suffered a good deal from the effects of his upset, was so anxious to embrace his old friend, that he had no sooner deposited his slender baggage at the sign of "The City of Birling" than he repaired to the Hotel Felsenbourg, where, as he learnt by the direction on the letter, he was to find the unlucky Maurice.

The evening was somewhat advanced; and the streets of the town, very different from those of his own quiet little place of abode, were filled with passengers on foot and in carriages. Waldau at length found out the place to which he had been directed, and saw written, above a very well lighted portico, "The Felsenbourg Palace." He entered with timidity and hesitation, looking

about for some one who would inform him in what part of so vast an edifice he might find the very humble individual he was in search of. While he was thus employed a young man passing by him attracted all his attention. There was quite light enough for him to see that this person was dressed in a most splendid manner. He wore a court dress, glittering with lace and embroidery; and in his hand he held an elegant hat, decorated with a large white plume. The town-clerk drew himself up to let this superb personage pass, when, by the half glance which his awe permitted him to steal at him, he recognised, to his astonishment, the banished son! his own friend of former times!—in short, Maurice!

Waldau was overcome with surprise. He could not believe his eyes;—he thought he was under the influence of some illusion. He attempted to speak, but the sound died upon his lips; and all that he could do was to stand open-mouthed, gazing after the receding apparition which had thus suddenly crossed his path, and which made him doubt the evidence of his senses.

He soon recovered himself, but continued to gaze at the figure as it passed along the extensive colonnade, under the lamps of which the glittering of the dress and the waving of the white plume made it still visible. At this moment a little man dressed in black passed, and Waldau advanced with an air of desperate resolution to

ascertain whether he had really been deceived or not.

" My good sir," he said, half breathless, " will you do me the favour to tell me who is the gentleman just entering yonder door at the end of the colonnade?"

" Yes, sir," replied the little man; " that is M. Wiesel."

" Is it, indeed, M. Wiesel? But tell me, sir, for heaven's sake, in what character is he here to-night."

" In a very important character, I assure you, sir," replied the little man, making a grave bow; no less than that of the prince's confidant and chief favorite."

Waldau was now more surprised than ever; and so rapt was he in his astonishment that he did not perceive that the little man, from whom he meant to ask a thousand other questions, had disappeared. His delight at the prosperity of his friend transported him beyond measure, and he burst into a sort of ecstacy, exclaiming, in a tone something like that of Don Quixote when he made his first sally into the plain of Montiel, " O fortunate Birling! thrice-blessed city! I see Prosperity and Plenty directing their flight towards thee! The favours of the court, *gratia regum*, honour, renown, and distinction among the cities of the land, will be thy lot. The horn of abundance will be poured out within thy walls. From the

confines of thy narrow tomb look out, thou inflexible father, and see that he whom thou didst exile from thy roof is become the ornament of thy family—*stirpis decorum!* Inexorable brother, come hither, and look upon this new Joseph! repeat, with thy cruel prototypes, 'Behold, he whom we banished is now sitting on the right hand of the prince!' Gentle, amiable Mary, what joy will be thine! Heaven has listened to thy prayers. And ye, my friends and fellow-citizens! ye also shall rejoice; for he whom you have bewailed is returned, and you shall share in his glory!"

After this very emphatic soliloquy, in which the town-clerk of Birling unburdened himself of the feelings which labored in his bosom, he felt considerably relieved, and hastened to his inn, where he wrote the following letter to his friend, the elder Wiesel:—

"I have but two words to say to you, senator; but they are words of gold—news of price. Your brother is the prince's confidant and chief favorite. You may believe what I say; for, although my bones ache with bruises, as though I had been pounded in a mortar, I am (thanks be to Heaven!) *compos mentis*. I say to you again that he is the prince's favorite. I can't tell you how this has been brought about, but I have seen himself, with my own eyes, *solus cum solo*, covered with gold and diamonds. Notwithstanding his dignity, he appeared just as cheerful and good-

tempered as when we were all three together at school, enjoying in equal shares the rod of our old master, who has, ere this, I trust, received his reward in the lower part of the other world, and to whom nothing can be at once so much of a privation and a punishment as to dwell in a *bottom*-less pit. You see, worthy senator, a good heart does not change with the variations of fortune—

'*Vixit gabiis ut vixit in agro.*'

'In courts, as in a cot, his life the same.'

"Juvenal was right—and so was Madame Wiesel, whose hands I most respectfully kiss—assuring you, senator, that I am

"Your most faithful friend and servant,

"GOTTFRIED WALDAU."

Waldau thought this was an occasion on which no expense should be spared, and he therefore dispatched his letter by an express before he went to bed.

After the excitement occasioned by the recent events had in some measure subsided, and the leisure of repose, as well as the warmth of the bed, enabled him to think of himself, he began to feel the effects of his fall, which he had scarcely had time before to attend to. He was seized with a violent pain in his loins, and tormented with a fever, which prevented him from sleeping during the whole of the night, and thus deprived him of all the glowing dreams to which

his meeting with the noble Maurice must have given birth. In the morning he found himself so unwell that he was compelled to send for a physician. The good Waldau was chagrined at this piece of ill fortune, less on account of his own sufferings than for the attack which the expense attending his illness must necessarily make upon his very slender purse. When, however, he thought of Maurice, he became in some measure tranquillized; and he immediately set about writing to his old schoolfellow in a style which he thought well adapted to the occasion, and very courtly, carefully putting the title of Excellency at the head of his epistle, that Maurice might see he had a proper notion of the manner in which things should be done. "A decent and becoming humility," said he to himself, as he rounded his respectful periods, "is never out of season in that place called a court—the air of which is very unfavorable to the memory of its inhabitants, and where the sight of an old friend is often less agreeable than that of a new valet."

In the mean time Waldau's other letter was on its way to Birling, which place it reached at a moment when the senator Wiesel was employed in the amusing and lively occupation of walking up and down his room, and making the sand with which the floor was covered (as was the universal custom in that part of Germany) creak and grate under his steps. Now and then he broke

silence, but it was merely for the purpose of indulging his causeless ill temper against his patient wife, who sat quietly at work at one end of the room, and who was too much accustomed to his unjust reproofs to suffer them to make any impression upon her. This matrimonial amusement was interrupted by the servant's entrance, who announced that a courier from the *residenz* had arrived, and desired to speak with the senator. The man was admitted, and, advancing towards M. Wiesel, handed him the dispatch. After turning it round, and over and over again, to find the mark by which the payment of the postage was indicated, and without which the senator never opened any letters, he asked the express if he had received nothing besides the packet.

"No," replied the man, "nothing but orders to make haste hither, and to take four florins of you for my pains."

Wiesel at first intended to give back the parcel to the messenger, not choosing to run the risk of so costly an affair, which might, after all, be worth nothing; but the man's assurance that he had been told by the writer that its contents were of the highest importance at length induced him to break the seal.

His wife looked earnestly at him as he perused the letter: at first his eyebrows were contracted, and his forehead drawn into deep wrinkles; soon, however, his features relaxed, and he looked

better pleased. He approached Madame, and handed the letter to her without saying any thing. As she read it the tears rapidly coursed down her glowing cheeks, and her eyes were raised to that Heaven by which her prayers had been heard.

"Take a pen," said Wiesel, "and answer this letter;" my hand trembles too much to permit me to write."

She hesitated; but, as her husband insisted, Madame Wiesel did as he bade her. The reply was short, and was dictated by M. Wiesel: it announced to the town-clerk his intention to set off immediately for the *residenz*, and begged him to get a lodging ready at the inn where he was himself staying.

While Madame was writing, the senator had resumed his walk up and down the chamber, in visible agitation. Ill humour, embarrassment, and constraint, by turns tortured him: on a sudden he put his hand to his head, as an idea struck him."

"That unlucky letter," he cried; "what is to be done if my brother has seen it? and, perhaps, Waldau may have given it to him."

"Do you mean your own answer to his letter?" asked Madame.

"Yes," he replied; "what other can I mean but the answer to that Judas-like letter, which he wrote only to betray me into a refusal of his re-

quest? I would lay a hundred to one that Waldau, wise as he is, has been fool enough to give it him; and this newly-made grand gentleman, Maurice, who only wants an excuse to break off our connexion, will leap for joy at the pretext which it will afford him."

The answer was now delivered to the messenger, together with the four florins, and he was sent off.

The senator then took his hat and cane, and repaired to a coffee-house, where he was in the habit of passing his evenings.

In this social spot about a dozen of the inhabitants of the city were in the invariable practice of assembling nightly around an immense stove, where they contrived, notwithstanding that an earthen substance of some sort was constantly between their lips, either in the shape of a long Nuremberg pipe, stuffed with real Kanaster, or a large pot filled with Brunswick beer, to discuss at great length, and very learnedly, all the latest news of the province; the strangers who had come to the city; the difference between the temperature of former winters and that under which they at present shivered; with an infinity of subjects equally interesting and important. In general Wiesel played the first fiddle in all these deliberations; and, upon political subjects in particular, his decrees were looked upon as absolute. On the present occasion, however,

to the great astonishment of the honorable and intelligent assembly, he took no part in their grave discussions.

One of the principal members of this respectable club was an old lieutenant, who had lived at Birling ever since his age and infirmities had compelled him to quit the army—a period of nearly fifteen years. His chief reason for fixing his abode in this city was the moderate price of all the necessaries of life; and he could in no other have made the two-and-twenty florins per month, which his half pay produced for him, go so far, or contribute so effectually to his *otium cum dignitate.* With the exception of the trifling stakes at a game of chess, which he won daily, or rather nightly, of M. Wiesel, these two-and-twenty florins per month were his sole support. The practice of beating Wiesel at chess had given the latter a high opinion of his parts; and he was on all difficult occasions glad to avail himself of the old soldier's advice. The senator now endeavored to discover his faithful counsellor through the dense vapour, which concealed him, like one of Homer's deities, in its fragrant cloud.

"My dear captain," said Wiesel, when at length he had puffed away with his hat so much smoke as enabled him to identify the soldier's red nose—"my dear captain," (for at Birling, as well as in some other places, half-pay lieutenants

are in courtesy called captains,) " you have lived at the *residenz*, where, as I have heard you say, you have still some relations. You must therefore know better than any other person who are the people in credit at court. I beg you will do me the favour to read this letter, which I have received from our town-clerk. Tell me what you think of it. Have the miracles he relates really happened? or is he, do you think, only a crazy fool? For my own part, I confess, I am quite bewildered."

The retired warrior, whose literary talents had never been much exercised—and talents, like other bright things, will grow rusty for want of use—drew his spectacles from the bottom of his pocket, and, after wiping them slowly and carefully, he placed them on his nose, and set himself to decipher Waldau's epistle. After a quarter of an hour had been consumed in this manner, he returned it to the senator, exclaiming, " By my soul, sir, but that's very surprising!"

At this exclamation the party round the stove rose up in a body, and remained with their eyes fixed, and their mouths wide open—symptoms which, even in Germany, express the highest degree of astonishment.

" Gently, gently, my good friend," said Wiesel; " I beseech you not to let this get abroad—whisper to me only what you think of it."

" What I think of it!" said the soldier, whis-

pering into the ear of Wiesel in a tone louder than that of his exclamation—" Egad, sir, what I think of it is, that your brother has made himself master of the place, and that you must follow him through the breach. Since Waldau writes so, who can doubt it? I remember, besides, to have heard that our prince, who is a great lover of the arts, has collected in his travels I can't tell you how many artists of every description—painters, poets, players, musicians, dancers; and that he gives them all sorts of encouragement. Your brother is, perhaps, among them. At all events you must not be sleeping here, when you ought to be active elsewhere. Go, hasten to join him, and follow up the attack while there is time."

The senator thanked the brave lieutenant, whose advice he said he would follow; and promised, moreover, that his brother's influence, as far as he could direct it, should be at his friend's command.

Two hours had not elapsed from the time of this interview when the unusual sound of a postilion's horn was heard through the quiet streets of Birling. A post calêche passed rapidly through them, in which were the senator and his wife, on their way to the *residenz*.

Waldau had not dispatched his letter to the prince's favorite more than half an hour when he heard a rap at the door of his chamber. He was

still in bed ; but, even if he had been dressed, the stiffness which had attended his fall would have disabled him from rising to open the door.

" Come in !" he cried ; and a moment after Maurice stood in his own proper person at the foot of his bed.

His appearance was very different from that of the preceding day : there was neither lace nor any other ornament on his clothes, nor did any thing in his habit denote in the smallest degree the dignity of his station. He wore a simple walking-dress, not distinguishable from that of the commonest order of citizens.

The town-clerk of Birling rose up in his bed with a great effort, and attempted to bow : but the attempt was in vain ; the nerves of his back rebelled against any such exertion in their present stiffened condition.

" Well," cried Maurice, as he eagerly embraced his old friend, " once more do we meet. The sight of thee, dear Waldau, recalls to me the recollection of those happy days of carelessness and gaiety, when all our sorrows passed like light clouds over our young hearts, and made as little impression on them. But you are silent, man. Is this your welcome to an old crony and schoolfellow after so many years' absence ? Are you going to revenge upon me all the wicked pranks I have played on you, and against the remembrance of which (to use one of your own favorite

law phrases) I hoped I might now plead a limitation? I thought that length of time had been a bar to your action."

"It is, it is, indeed," said the sick man; "they are remembered no longer. *Prescripta et oblita;* and may Heaven punish me if at this moment I experience any other feelings towards you but those of respect and deference, to which"——

"Come, come, Waldau;" cried Maurice, "leave off your joking, and let us talk seriously. Your request for money, my dear fellow, has mortified me excessively, because I am in no situation to comply with it. As to your other request, I have laughed at it till my sides ached. You wish me to introduce you to the minister, and to procure for you a reduction of the tax on our native city. Tell me now, in sober sadness, whom you take me for."

"Whom do I take you for? Gracious Heaven!" cried the town-clerk, cursing in his heart all courtiers, and their intrepid assurance, "who should I take you for but for the prince's chosen friend, the prime favorite, which is better than being prime minister:—hand and glove with the chief ruler, as the report goes every where, *urbi et orbi?*"

"My poor friend," said Maurice in a consolatory tone, "you are worse than I expected to find you. It is the fever, my dear Waldau, that has filled your poor head with these odd fancies."

"Oh, yes!" replied Waldau, sarcastically, but cut to the heart's core by what he thought was an attempt to extinguish at once all the hopes he had entertained of Maurice's aid; "certainly, you are quite right—it is the fever, and these notions are illusions, *ægri somnia*. It was under the influence of the fever that I thought I saw you last night, as you strutted through the colonnade at the Felsenbourg palace in your way to the court. It was one of those cheats which an inflamed brain puts upon us that made me think I saw you glittering in lace and jewels, *gemmis atque auro*."

"You saw me going to court!"

"Yes, you, the prince's chief favorite."

"The prince's favorite! My dear Waldau, am I to laugh or to weep at these extravagances?"

"*Auri sacra fames*, the thirst of wealth will soon render you incapable of the one and the other."

"How can you have thus deceived yourself?"

"It's all very well: and the little man in black he deceived himself too; he was under the influence of a fever."

"What little man in black?"

"Why the little man who followed the superb and glittering Wiesel along the porticos of the palace."

"Ah, now I perceive what you mean," said Maurice; and, all his anxiety about his friend's sanity being removed, he burst into so immode-

rate a fit of laughter as prevented him from continuing his speech. When he recovered he said "Now I know what it is that has thus deceived you; and I find once more in you the good, simple, honest-hearted Waldau. I a courtier! I a favorite! Ah, my dear old friend, you will laugh with me now, in spite of your fever, when I tell you that I am one of a company of players at this moment engaged to act in the hotel of the old Count de Felsenbourg. Yesterday I personated, for the first time, the character of the *Confidant* in a new play; and the grave man in black, whose authority you have so solemnly quoted, is the tailor to our company. He had been just fitting me with a noble coat of scarlet serge, covered with Mannheim tinsel, and an innumerable quantity of spangles. To this simple circumstance I find I am indebted for your very pompous epistle, and for the unlooked-for respect with which you have been so good as to greet me. Now, dear Waldau, are you satisfied of what shreds and patches my *Excellency* is made up? There is only one thing which causes me to regret laying down the title with which your kindness has invested me—that is, that I shall not be able to do you much good with the minister."

"God help me!" cried Waldau, clasping his hands, and looking most ruefully, "are you really a player?"

"Indeed I am, and, as I flatter myself, not one of the worst."

"Then I am utterly undone. Your brother, the senator, will kill me at least."

Waldau's terror put an end to the mirth in which Maurice continued to indulge. He asked what caused his fear; and learnt from him that, in his haste to make M. Philip Wiesel a partaker of his brother's good fortune, he had written to him; and how great reason he had, therefore, to dread his rage, when he should discover the mistake. The disappointment and the fright together so hampered the poor town-clerk that his fever became much worse, and he was really very ill. Maurice staid with him, and rendered him all the assistance in his power. As he was handing something to the sick man from the table, his eye fell upon the letter which his brother had addressed to him. He opened it, and grieved to find from its contents that this brother was still the same unkind and unfeeling person as he had always been. His last hope had been bottomed upon the funds which he did not doubt he should receive at his father's death. They now failed him, and he was reduced to despair. He was loaded with debts, the payment of which it was impossible any longer to postpone.

"Poor Louisa!" he cried—"my promised happiness—all—all driven away by this one blow!

Waldau," he said, turning to him, "for God's sake say something consoling to me!"

Poor Waldau was, however, too much in want of consolation himself, and suffering too much pain, to have any comfortable things to say to his friend, and they both abandoned themselves to their melancholy thoughts.

The fair Louisa, whose name Maurice had just uttered, was one of the prettiest and most virtuous girls that ever adorned a station infinitely below her merits. She was the support—almost the guardian angel—of an infirm mother and of two young sisters, for whom she procured the means of existence by the labour of her own hands. The obscure five-pair-of-stairs' room, which she occupied with her family, was very near to that of the player, and this threw them frequently in the way of each other. The young girl's innocence, her simple candour, and the boyish good humour of Maurice, brought about a sort of intimacy between them. This intimacy soon ripened into a more tender feeling, and nothing could be more natural than that it should do so. Poverty has at least this one advantage, (and as it is, perhaps, the only one, it should not be forgotten,) that it does away with a thousand forms and ceremonies which are always in the way of one's happiness, and with which the more opulent conditions of society are stuck full. Wie-

sel was received into the bosom of this interesting family, and soon looked upon as their most assiduous and indispensable friend, although he had no other letter of recommendation than his poverty. Louisa, who, the more she saw him, was the more deeply charmed with his disposition and manners, did not hesitate to avow the affection she felt for him. One evening, after they had been to the play together,—and a theatrical representation is always a main help to a lover's avowal of his passion, because it inspires him with eloquence, and softens his mistress's heart;—one evening, upon their return from the play, in which Maurice had been received (to use the phrase of the play-bills) with the most unbounded applause, he told his love to the gentle Louisa, and begged her to reward his passion by uniting her destiny to his.

The beautiful girl, with an amiable and sensible frankness which accompanied all that she did, told him she had but one objection, and that was, the narrowness of their circumstances; and that this forbade either of them to think of marrying until their fortunes should be bettered.

Maurice, sanguine as he was, could not parry this objection. He was silenced, and the lovers could only swear eternal fidelity and affection to each other. Hope and Love sealed the vows which they plighted; their hearts were so completely intoxicated with the joyful sentiment which filled them, and so perfect was their reli-

ance upon the kindness of Providence, that they already fancied they could discern a bright and glowing prospect of future felicity through the clouds which lowered about them. Alas! the letter which Maurice had just read overturned in a moment all the castles in the air which he had been so carefully building.

Poor Maurice staid with his sick friend, and, notwithstanding the dejection of his spirits, he endeavored to amuse Waldau until the evening, when his duties called him to the theatre. Before he departed he had procured an old nurse to take his place. Waldau was a little better as Maurice approached his bed to bid him farewell. The complaints of the old woman about the weather, as she went to the fire to dry her cloak, which the thickly-falling snow had wetted through, reached Waldau's ears, and reminded him of the cloak he had brought with him. He now begged Maurice to put it on, and backed his persuasion by assuring him that his brother had intended it for him.

"A present from my brother!" cried Maurice.

"Not so much a present as a restitution of what is your own, and I fear it is the only one he may be inclined to make you. Never mind, it will keep out the weather; and besides, which will make you value it the more, it was your father's. In that very mantle, on his return from a long journey, he yielded up his last breath."

Waldau's words brought to the mind of Maurice the recollection of his father. The tears started into his eyes as he looked round the chamber, and saw the cloak hanging on a chair-back. He remembered that father, venerable at all times, and severe as he had been occasionally; but Maurice forgot at this moment all, save his parent's kindness and his own duty. He experienced the feeling, at once affecting and consolatory, which comes across one's heart, when, in the midst of sorrow, the recollection of a dear respected being, over whom the tomb has closed for ever, rises to one's mind. Every tinge of bitterness was purged away from it; and Maurice could have fancied, as he looked at the old well-remembered garment, that the form of his aged parent still filled it, and stretched, as he pronounced upon him a paternal benediction, the same arms which had once driven him from his home. With a bursting heart he reverently kissed the cloak, and, putting it on his shoulders, he walked out.

The quivering light of a feeble lamp threw its rays on the old nurse, whom fatigue, and the perfect tranquillity which prevailed in the warm room, soon drew to sleep. The town-clerk was kept awake by pain as well as by mental anxiety, and had no other occupation than to gaze upon the bare walls of the dismal abode to which he was confined. The perfect stillness of sound and motion which reigned throughout the chamber was

undisturbed, save by the palsied trembling of the old crone's head, which threw a shaking shadow on the curtains of the bed, and the monotonous snoring which marked her profound repose.

Waldau's disposition was eminently national: nothing suited him better than a life of perfect tranquillity, and as little noise as possible. The scene before him, therefore, was entirely to his taste, and perhaps he was not so much mistaken in his choice as some folks may be ready to imagine.

"What are the advantages," said he to himself, "of a more active life? On one side hopes arise which always end in disappointment;—on the other calumnies and undeserved injuries destroy one's best enjoyments. Is it not better, then, to repose far from tumult, beyond the reach of any injuries of mankind and the weather?"——

But it is not worth while to repeat all that the town-clerk said to himself, because the sudden entrance of the senator put an abrupt termination to his soliloquy.

"What a frightful winter this is!" said he, as he entered; "shall we never again be warm in this accursed climate?" and he raked together the nearly exhausted ashes of the fire. "But, Waldau, how did you manage to hurt yourself?—Never mind, you can tell me all about that at some other time, when we are more at leisure. But, in the first place, let me know, have you

seen my brother? Who could ever have imagined?—who could have supposed?—Well, but have you seen him?"

"He has but this moment quitted me," replied Waldau.

"Is it possible?" said the senator; "and is Maurice then well disposed towards us? is he kind and affable?"

"He is as honest and as good a fellow as ever you knew."

"Did I not say so?" cried Madame Wiesel.

"I shall not be in too great a hurry to believe it, however," said the senator: "he is a courtier, and of course he is externally polite. But, Waldau, I hope I need not ask you whether you have given him the letter which I wrote in such haste."

"Oh, no," replied Waldau; "it lies here upon the table."

Wiesel approached the spot which Waldau pointed out:—he looked in vain for the letter. "Search your pockets, Waldau," he said; "you must have it there:" and, without waiting, he set about rummaging the pockets of the town-clerk's clothes, which were lying near his bed.

"It is possible," said Waldau, in great agitation, "that it may have fallen into your brother's hands."

"Good Heaven! and can you lie there quietly while you utter so dreadful a suppo-

sition? A thousand curses upon you!——He has read it, and is filled with rage at its contents. I shall go mad."

"Be quiet," said Waldau; "don't put yourself in so great a passion. It is of no consequence."

"Not in a passion! of no consequence! I tell you, sir, it is of the very last consequence, and that I must immediately go and"—— Without waiting to finish his speech, the senator rushed out of the room and into the street, which, notwithstanding the heavy snow-storm that raged, he was traversing at a rapid pace, before the town-clerk had recovered from the astonishment that his transport had excited, or had time to explain to him the discovery he had but recently hit upon.

The senator of Birling was so much out of breath with the exertion he had made, that, when he arrived at the Hotel de Felsenbourg, he was hardly able to articulate. He managed, however, to explain to the porter that he wished to speak to M. Wiesel.

"He is now in the theatre," replied the man.

"Then I must go to the theatre," said Mr. Philip; "I must see him without loss of time;" and he hastened onwards to the place pointed out to him by the porter.

On this evening a tragedy was represented, which was in the very zenith of its popularity. It was the *William Tell* of Schiller. The house

was crowded to the ceiling. The box-keeper told the senator, in answer to his inquiries, that there was but one box unoccupied, which, being very near to the stage, had been rejected by every one who came with no other intention than to see the performance. Mr. Philip, however, had no objection to it on this account, because he was not too fond of the drama at any time; and, upon the present occasion particularly, his object was only to meet with his brother. He was therefore glad to get this seat, which commanded a good view of the whole house. His eyes were anxiously directed to each of the boxes which seemed to contain distinguished personages; but he could not discern his brother in any one of them. He was surprised at this, although it was occasioned by one of the simplest and most satisfactory reasons in the world,—Maurice was then behind the scenes, preparing for his entrance on the stage.

At length the curtain was drawn up. The scene represented a wild mountainous country; and the feeble light, and the noise of the rustling wind, conveyed to the audience the impression that a storm was then raging. The senator was a very sagacious personage at Birling, but he was not in the habit of seeing and comprehending dramatic spectacles; and a certain feeling of terror took possession of him. The flashes of ignited rosin, which mimicked the flashes of

lightning, filled him with apprehension ; and, before he had recovered the effect of the first impression which the scene had made on him, his attention was absorbed by the sight of a figure, which was only dimly visible by the uncertain and fitful blazes of the storm. As he gazed at it he trembled—his hair stood erect—his nerves quivered—his whole frame was convulsed. The figure advanced ; and to his surprise and horror he recognised in it his own father. It was too exact and faithful a representation of his aged parent to admit of a doubt. There stood the venerable man, just as he had appeared the moment before he was seized with a fit of apoplexy on his return from a journey ; of which attack he expired in the arms of his son. The same old grey cloak was wrapped about him, his features were precisely the same, and the same white hairs and beard excited once again the respect and veneration of his son. He looked at it almost petrified with horror, while, to add to his confusion, the phantom advanced, and, fixing its stern eyes upon him, in thrilling accents charged him with having defrauded his brother of his birthright.

Remorse and terror froze Philip's heart within his bosom : he could bear no more, but rushed out of the box in perfect distraction. He ran along the corridors, and precipitately entered another box, the door of which he found open. Two young ladies were sitting in it, to whom he

apologized somewhat incoherently for his intrusion, and begged, at the same time, that he might be permitted to retain the seat he had taken with so little ceremony. This was readily accorded him; and the appearance of the lights, no less than the amiable cheerfulness of his young companions, soon restored his self-possession. He saw the adventure of the stage in its proper light, and believed that he had been terrified only by an accidental resemblance, and by the novelty of the spectacle. By way of making a favorable impression on the ladies, he mentioned the name of his brother, who, he thought, as the prince's favorite, must be known to all the world. The effect of this was perfectly magical, and answered his warmest expectations. The ladies were Louisa and one of her young acquaintances. She looked at him with a charming smile as she asked—"Are you, sir, the brother of that M. Wiesel who is so generally admired and applauded?"

A loud military symphony prevented the senator from giving any lengthened explanation; and he said merely, "Yes, madame, I am his brother."

The play proceeded; and Louisa, who was very naturally desirous to make herself agreeable to her future brother-in-law, turning round, said to him—"It is very provoking that they have given him so bad a part. You will, however, see

that he will make it very striking, inferior as it is."

"I beg your pardon," said Mr. Philip, leaning forward, and in some confusion; for, as he spoke, he saw the object of his recent terror again appear on the stage at the head of a troop of Helvetian mountaineers. He wore the old grey cloak no longer, but was clad in the ancient picturesque costume of the period at which the scene of the drama was laid.

"There," said Louisa, pointing to Maurice—for it was he—"do you not recognise him? And here you will find his name," she said, handing him a bill, in which he read "Conrad Hunn, one of the conspirators, *M. Wiesel.*"

This was too much for any man, even if he should happen to be a senator, to bear. Mr. Philip was now more distressed than ever at the supposed apparition of his father. He leant back against a pillar of the box in a most unenviable frame of mind. All the visions that he had indulged in were demolished at one blow:—the wealth, the place, the dignities, which he had, as it were, in his very grasp, were melted into thin air;—all had fled away, "like the baseless fabric of a vision," and the spell was dissolved by the mere appearance of the *Conspirator* Conrad Hunn! Confusion, and a rage which bordered on despair, took possession of his soul as the truth flashed

upon him. He quitted Louisa and her companion with no less abruptness than he had joined them, and rushed through the streets (now almost deserted) in a state of indescribable anger. The cold night-blast howled in his ears, and its sharp whispers sounded to him like the suggestions of an evil spirit. They could not be those of a good one, for they seemed to insinuate that he could do nothing more discreet or meritorious than to kill the poor town-clerk out of hand, who had, however innocently, been the cause of all this mistake.

Madame Wiesel had remained, on her husband's abrupt departure, at the bedside of the invalid Waldau. Her assiduous kindness, and, perhaps, not less her amiable and gentle manners, had done so much towards Waldau's recovery, that upon the physician's return he expressed his surprise at the amendment of his patient, and, after prescribing some slight potion, withdrew.

He had scarcely disappeared when Maurice entered. The joy with which he met his sister-in-law was rapturous and mutual. She had been the companion of his earliest and happiest years; and time, and the intimate connexion which her marriage with his brother had formed, had cemented their attachment.

"Then," said Maurice, after the first congratulations were over, "I was not mistaken; it

was my brother whom I saw this evening at the theatre, and who looked at me, I am sorry to say, as if he would have eaten me."

"But what did he say to you, Maurice?" asked Madame Wiesel.

"He did not say any thing," replied Maurice. "When I quitted Waldau this afternoon I was in low spirits, and rather agitated. I went to the theatre, where I had to play a character well adapted to the temper of my mind. In a scene which represented a storm I had to deliver a speech, in which there is this sentence:

> 'Has he not foully wronged his father's son?
> Does he not, even now, with false pretence
> And most unnatural fraud, retain that wealth
> Which justice, and the country's righteous laws,
> Have made his brother's?'

"Just as I pronounced these words I perceived, in a box close to the stage, a person who was looking at me very earnestly. I could not mistake his features, although it is so long since we met. My heart told me it was my brother, and prompted me to rush into his arms; but circumstances forbade, and his look, too, made me fear for the reception I might meet with. At length (but not without considerable difficulty) I overcame the feelings which oppressed me; and as soon as the act was over I went to look for Philip, but he had quitted the theatre."

"Come, come," said Waldau, "let us hope that

all will turn out for the best. Your veins are filled with the same blood;—the bond of fraternal affection may be loosened, but cannot be broken. He is your senior, Maurice; submit, I implore you, to what he may require: besides which he is, as perhaps you do not know, a senator; and, whatever you may think, I can tell you he has the law on his side. Take example by the patience and forbearance which Mary always displays."

Maurice needed none of Waldau's exhortations; for to contend with his brother was the last thing in the world he could have been prevailed on to do. He turned round to his sister-in-law, and, once more embracing her, he put on his cloak, as he went out to the apothecary's shop, to procure the necessary ingredients for the prescription which the physician had left.

As he entered the shop his attention was particularly attracted by an old woman, who was going in at the same moment. She was bent almost double with age, and her eyes, which were of a singular brightness, were fixed upon him. He was too much busied with the errand that brought him thither to think long of the old woman, and applied immediately to one of the persons in the shop for the articles he wanted. He was, however, obliged to look round, for the old crone had taken hold of the top of his grey cloak, and was passing her hand slowly and

earnestly over the almost threadbare plush of which the collar was made.

"Don't stir, child," said she, as Maurice drew back for the purpose of putting an end to a familiarity which he did not like.

"What do you see on my cloak, my good old woman?" he asked; "there are no insects at this time of the year."

Maurice looked, as he spoke, at the old woman, whose shrivelled and discoloured features formed a strong contrast to the benevolent vivacity which seemed to animate them, and which made her look like one of the subjects of Gerard Douw's best pictures.

"Is it a spider that you have found in the cloak?" asked the apothecary. "I hope it is, for that is a certain prognostic of riches to the person who wears it. It is, indeed:" he added, as Maurice shrugged his shoulders incredulously.

The old woman laughed, but said nothing; and went away with the purchase she had made. Maurice, having also dispatched his business, quitted the shop. As he passed along the street he heard a voice behind him, which he recognised for that of the old woman.

"Hist!—young man, I have a neighbour, an old clothes' man: your cloak is just such a thing as he would like to buy;—will you part with it?"

"Go along, you old witch," replied Maurice,

"and sell yourself to him, if you have such an inclination to make bargains."

"Why, what can you see in such a rag to be fond of it?"

"Rag or not, I have a value for it."

"But, at least, yon must confess it is not for its beauty that you wish to keep it."

"Why then, if you must know, you inquisitive old woman, it is because this cloak is all that I have left of my father's property."

"Your father's!—ah, my child, you do well to honour his memory; for any one can tell you are his own son: you are like him in every feature, only that there is a good-tempered smile at the corner of your mouth, which he never had."

"Yes, yes, he had the same smile once, but the troubles of the world had worn it away."

"Say, rather, that time had done so; time, that does so much mischief. I am sure I have reason to complain of it, for, if it had heaped threescore years less on my old head, you would not let me be standing, exposed to the driving snow, here in the street. Oh, no! you would long ere this have flung your cloak over my shoulders.——"

"Go along, you old gipsy; with such nymphs as you one is in no danger of temptation."

"Never mind, my child; I cannot say much for your complaisance, though I like your frankness, and will reward it."

"You may keep your reward to yourself; I assure you I don't want it."

"How naturally that word *want* comes out of a man's mouth when his head is filled with thinking of it!"

"Who are you, old hag?" cried Maurice, pulling her, half angry and half in jest, under a lamp which was just by.

"There is nothing in my wrinkled face to repay the pains you are taking to look at it, my child: perhaps, however, my advice may be more serviceable to you. Listen to me then;—get home and go into your chamber; fasten the door after you; and, having done so, rip open the collar of your cloak: when you have done all this, go down upon your knees, and pray to Heaven to grant you wisdom." The old woman hobbled away as she uttered the last words, leaving Maurice not a little astonished.

He put his hand to the collar of the cloak, and felt a rustling, as if there was some paper within it. He hastened home, and recounted the particulars of his adventure with the old woman to Madame Wiesel and Waldau.

"Good Heavens!" cried Waldau, clapping his hand upon his forehead—"I have it!—It must be so!—Don't you remember, Mary, the eternal fears and jealousies which used to torment your father about his money, and which all the keys and coffers in the world could not quiet? It

would be the most natural thing imaginable for such a man to convert his money into paper, which he could so easily conceal. I have no doubt that the old woman whom Maurice met was in the secret—some old hostess, or housekeeper, or something of that kind—and that she knew the old gentleman used his cloak as a strong box. He was a better hand at amassing ducats than managing a needle; and he must needs have had recourse to some female assistance. You know it was immediately upon his return from one of his journeys that he died so suddenly. Make haste, Mary, and rip open the collar; there are scissors in my bag. No scruples, Maurice; the money is yours *proprio jure*."

Madame Wiesel took the cloak, and exclaimed, joyfully, "that she was sure she felt papers within the lining." At this moment Maurice got up: "Do you not hear a noise?" he said: "there is a confusion of voices rushing like a torrent towards us."

"There is, indeed, a tumult," said Waldau. "Why do you tremble so, Mary?—Go out, Maurice, and see what it is."

Maurice went out, and returned almost immediately, pale and out of breath. Before, however, the cause of his sudden agitation is explained, it will be necessary to go back a little.

When Philip rushed out from the Felsenbourg hotel he was almost in a state of desperation.

He could not dismiss from his memory the terrific phantom of the stage: an invisible power prompted him to restore to his brother a share of the four thousand florins which he had found among his father's effects at the old gentleman's death. It seemed in vain that he resisted; and his conscience, which had too often and too long lain asleep, would not now be quieted.

Philip, as is commonly the practice with men suffering unusual agitation, sought to overcome the violence of his feelings by the rapidity of his movements. He was striding along, not knowing whither he went, when his evil destiny, or his distraction, led him to the edge of the canal, which was at this time thinly frozen over; but so much so, that it appeared, by the dim light which then prevailed, like a solid surface. The wretched man, at the first step, plunged beneath the ice. He was quickly drawn out by some persons who happened to be passing. He breathed still; but he had only time to say where he was dwelling, when he expired, death-stricken by the sudden cold of the water, and went to answer for his sins before a tribunal where justice is tempered with the most tender mercy.

It would be impossible to describe the grief and horror of the party at the inn when the pale cold corpse of Philip was brought in. Notwithstanding the slender claims which the deceased

had upon their sympathy and affection, nothing but the best and most amiable points of his character were now recollected, and they bewailed his loss as if he had been all that he ought to have been.

Among the disasters of this night, too, the loss of the cloak, about which so much expectation had been roused, was not the least. It had been carried off, as was thought, by one of the many persons who pressed into the room when Philip's body was brought in. Maurice made the most diligent search for it in every part of the city, but all his inquiries and his offers of reward were alike in vain.

Madame Wiesel returned to Birling, accompanied by Waldau. Soon after her arrival there Maurice received from her a packet, containing a very considerable share of the property which her husband had left. This generosity delighted, but did not astonish, Maurice. He immediately disposed of the larger part of the money in payment of his numerous debts. Relieved of this burden, by which one of the chief obstacles which lay in the way of his marriage with Louisa was removed, he saw once more revived the dawn of that happiness which he had before feared was for ever annihilated.

It almost always happens, in the affairs of this world, that, when a man's ill luck gets a sudden check, it seems to grow tired of pursuing him,

and lets him enjoy, undisturbed, all the good fortune which may fall to his share. Thus it was with Maurice, whose affairs, revived by his sister-in-law's generosity, now looked up, and went on rather prosperously. He was anxious to return to Birling, where he proposed to establish himself; but he had resolved not to revisit his household gods until he could crown them with myrtles; or, in plain language, until he could carry his dear Louisa home as his bride.

His diligence and good fortune, in little more than a year, enabled him to do this; and, about a month after his mourning for his brother had expired, the next ensuing Sunday was fixed upon for his marriage.

Weddings, like some other things, never come alone: Waldau, the simple honest-hearted Waldau, had been making himself as agreeable as he could to the good widow Wiesel, and had prevailed upon her to give him her hand on the same day that should unite Louisa to Maurice. The double wedding was celebrated with that frank and sincere, though somewhat rude joviality, which distinguished the times when folks were less refined, but not a jot less happy, than they are now. An old crystal cup, which had been for ages a chief instrument in all the merry-makings of the Wiesel family, went briskly about, and was by turns filled with sparkling Johannisberg or the perfumed Wertheimer; for

the unsocial practice of every drinker having a separate glass had not then reached the remote city of Birling.

In the evening a dance crowned the festivities of the day. Maurice displayed on his finger a valuable ring which the prince had given as a testimony of the admiration which his talents had excited in playing Don Carlos before him. If his highness had seen him on this occasion, he would have given him a pension; for the smiles of his Louisa excited him beyond all that he had felt before, and he played his part on this occasion a thousand times better than ever he had done, and looked as full of grace and nobleness as the Infanta himself. His gaiety seemed to diffuse itself throughout the company; and the laughter of himself and his guests was as loud as the music. Waldau was just about to lead off a dance with Louisa, and Mary and Maurice had taken their places next to them, when Maurice felt his sister-in-law's hand tremble as he held it within his own.

"What is the matter with you, Mary?" he asked; "what has terrified you? what is it that you are looking at?"

"Do you not see, Maurice," she replied, looking towards the door.

"No," he said, "I see nothing."

"Yonder—standing in the door-way—and wrapped in your father's cloak."

Maurice looked again, and saw in a moment that the object which had attracted his sister's notice was the same old woman whom he had met with in the apothecary's shop at Felsenbourg. She wore the very grey cloak which had disappeared in so unaccountable a manner. He ran to her immediately, and drew her into the middle of the room.

"Who are you, old witch?" he cried, shaking her gently; "what do you do with this cloak? and what brings you here? Speak quickly."

"You ask me so many questions at once!" said the old woman, laughing at him, and shaking her palsied head. "It is your lucky star that brings me here. As to the cloak—that is my own, for I bought it."

Maurice looked at her, and thought that the old woman had found the cloak and the money which it contained, and that now she was come to make a merit of restoring to him such part as she chose.

The old woman seemed to guess at the thoughts which passed through his head. "Giddy boy that you are," she said, "why did you despise my advice? Why did you so carelessly throw away this precious cloak? I found it one day hanging in the shop of my neighbour, the old clothes' man, who told me he bought it of a porter. But, pray, tell me what you think would have become of the bills, to the amount of twenty

thousand florins, which were sewed up in the collar, if I had not bought them and it for the exorbitant price of three crowns? There," she added, handing a packet to him at the same time that she threw off the cloak, "take them; and thank Heaven that your father's nurse has lived to restore his property to you."

"Were you, then, my father's nurse?"

"Yes, my child, I was; but it is a long while ago, and we can talk about that when you have nothing else to do. Be grateful to Heaven; be virtuous, and you will always be protected by Providence. Be a good husband—and now go on with your dancing."

"It is old Christina!" cried Waldau, who had drawn near.

"Yes, it is, indeed, old Christina," said the old woman, laughing at him—"old enough to remember your vows of eternal constancy to the councillor's niece. Oh fie, Waldau!"

"Don't blame him," said Maurice; "the love which he now professes is returned, and the other, you know, was not."

"May Heaven bless you, my children!" exclaimed the old woman. "But, come, I don't mean to quit you any more—that is, if you will spare me a corner somewhere among you; and I can tell you I have not lived so long without scraping up something towards boiling the pot."

"Oh!" cried Mary, with that amiable warmth

which was her character, and making a place for the old woman to sit down, " you shall never quit us."

In a very few days old Christina was a member of the family, and seemed as much at home as if she had never lived any where else. The two couples lived in the same house, and looked upon her as a sort of common grandmother. Their happiness was of that pure and uninterrupted kind which springs from the practice of the virtues of humble life. Piety, innocence, and goodness, marked their career, and their days had passed in a peaceful uniformity, when, about a year after her sudden appearance, old Christina one morning opened the door of Maurice's room, and stood wrapped up in the same grey cloak, and in the same attitude, as on the evening of his wedding-day. He opened his arms to embrace her.

" Gently, gently," she said, pushing him away.

" What have you got for me now?" he asked, seeing she was holding something very carefully under her cloak.

" Look!" said she, opening it; and she presented to the overjoyed parent the son and heir which his Louisa had just brought him.

My grandmother's story being finished, she said—

"Now, then, my dear Harry, as your last effort has been unanimously decided to be insufficient—*a coup manqué*—you must try again, and we shall all listen patiently to your story."

"Yes, Harry," said Elizabeth; "and mind that it *is* your own—not any of your Italian friends', if you please. We look for it out of your own head, and not from any old-fashioned little book."

"Your expectations, dear Elizabeth," replied Harry, "are, like those of a great many other ladies, somewhat unreasonable; and my exertions, like those of many other gentlemen, will, I fear, fall short of satisfying them. It is, I know, quite in vain for me to appeal against the sentence which has been pronounced upon me, and it is therefore useless to complain of it; but remember that I do always solemnly protest against its injustice."

"You shall have the full benefit of your protest," said the attorney; "and you are enough of a lawyer to know what that is."

"It is exactly what one lawyer may expect

to receive from the hands of another—nothing. But you, my dear Elizabeth, seem more unreasonable than any other of our friends here, for you ask me to tell you a story out of my own head. Do you remember, my love, that the world has now been created something more than five thousand years, and that all its various successions of inhabitants have been employed in telling stories during the whole of that period? and yet can you ask me to tell a new one? In the name of every thing that is fair—I don't mean pretty, but honest—is such a request to be complied with? And yet, I think, I might undertake to do so if you would promise to show me one story, properly called original, that has been written since you began to read stories. I would not be understood to say that they are a jot the less admirable for not having this quality; and, even if I thought they were, it would not answer my present purpose to broach any such doctrine. Human nature has nothing new in it: the combinations of accident have been exhausted; and, as stories are only representations of human nature and its accidents, you see it is impossible that there should be any thing strictly new produced from them. If they can be made agreeable, surely that will be enough; and I hope, with the indulgence of my friends, to give my story this quality. At all events, it will serve to pass away the rest of our evening as well as another."

"It might, perhaps, do so, if you would begin it," said my grandmother; "but you are always playing some trick or other to put off the moment of commencement."

"For once," my dear madam," replied Harry, "I am innocent of the charge you bring against me, because it is not I who am to begin."

"Oh, I beg your pardon, indeed it is," was uttered from nearly every body present.

"Patience, my good friends and gentle cousins—patience for a moment, and hear me explain. I am very desirous not again to incur your censure; but the truth is that I cannot at this moment recollect any thing that will satisfy you and restore my credit, which seems to have fallen unaccountably, and, as I think, undeservedly, in your estimation. I am literally in the case of Mr. Canning's needy Knife-grinder, and may truly say,

'Story! Lord bless you! I have none to tell you.'"

"This will not do, Harry," said every body again.

"Not so fast," said Harry; "I only ask a respite until to-morrow; and, in the mean time, I have prevailed upon my uncle, whose turn comes next to mine, to tell his story instead of me."

"Oh, that is a different thing!" was exclaimed; and the proposed substitute seemed to give universal satisfaction.

"Yes," said my uncle, disposing his gouty foot

upon the cushion, "Harry was making signals of distress; so I spoke with him. He told me he'd never a yarn ready to splice on to madam's (meaning my grandmother); and so I promised to overhaul my log for him, and to see whether I couldn't stand his friend."

"Oh, dear uncle," cried Elizabeth, "I shall be delighted: I never heard you tell a story."

"That's a——mistake, my love. You've heard me tell how I was cast away off the coast of Coromandel; and you've heard me tell about the blue lights that we saw on the shrouds the night that Admiral Duncan died; and"——

"Oh, yes, I've heard you tell an innumerable quantity of little anecdotes like those; but then, uncle, I thought they were all true."

"True, you jade! so they are; true to the letter."

"Well, but now, uncle, you are going to tell us a *story*, and nobody will value that the more for its veracity; although, if it prove as amusing as the shipwreck and the blue lights, I have no objection to its being as true as they are."

"You are a jade, and have always some sly manœuvre for bamboozling your old cripple of an uncle; but I won't forgive you this time unless you come and kiss me."

Elizabeth immediately hastened to the veteran's arms, and kissed him with all the ardour and affection of her character.

"When you have finished your embraces," said my grandmother, "perhaps, Hugh, you will let us have your story."

"With all my heart, mother," replied the captain; "but, first of all, if you please, I must tell you how I came by it. It isn't mine, and I scorn to sail under false colours. It's a story, though, which you never heard before; and, although I did'nt make it, I knew the man that did. The goods are of the right sort; and, though they are brought in by a different ship from the owner's, that's nothing at all to you. This tale, then, which I am now going to begin, was written by an old schoolfellow and messmate of mine. You knew Charley Russell, mother?" turning to my grandmother.

"Oh, yes," replied the old lady—"you mean the poor boy whom you enticed, or who enticed you, to run away from school."

"The very same—a light-haired curly-headed chap. Ah! it might be very wrong to run away from school, and I dare say it was; but I only wish, mother, you'd ever been for half a year to Scourge's grammar-school, and then you'd see how you would like being flogged every day, whether you deserved it or no."

"I'm very much obliged to you, Hugh," said my grandmother; "but, without any such painful experience, I am quite ready to believe that you were very cruelly treated. But you know it

was your own fault, for you never complained to any of us."

"No," said the captain, "I scorned to complain; and I thought it was better to break old Scourge's head, and to run away."

"And were you so naughty, uncle, as to run away from school?" asked Elizabeth.

"Why, yes, I was so naughty, as you call it, my dear; and I'll just tell you how it happened. Old Scourge was uncommonly fond of a nasty book which I hated: he called it the 'Latin Grammar,' and he wanted to make me learn it. Well, he wasn't the first that tried to do the same thing; but he had no better luck than other folks. I wasn't more than twelve years old when I went aboard his ship—his school, I mean—and he tried me for a whole year, but I could'nt or wouldn't (hang me if I know which) learn a word. Then he took to beating it into me; and every morning, before breakfast, he used to give me a regular starting if I couldn't say the lesson. I did not like the starting, but then I knew my head wasn't built to carry such a cargo as he wanted to put aboard of it; and I thought it was as well not to lose my time; so I made up my mind not to learn a word. Well, he went on flogging for a good while, until we both of us got tired; but I was tired first. I had been reading the 'Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner,' and took a main

liking to the sea. Charley Russell, who was an orphan, and at the same school, had a notion of a similar kind; and Charley and I used to lay our heads together, and plot about deserting and going to sea. Well, after talking about it a great many times, at length we agreed to do it, and a morning was fixed. Charley proposed to set off before the other boys got up: but I couldn't bring myself to leave old Scourge without thanking him for all the good turns he had done me; so I persuaded Charley to go by himself, and to wait for me at a village about five miles from the school. The morning came, and we had made up a bundle containing our joint stock, which was not very large. I let my messmate down into the garden by the sheets of our bed, and then dropped the bundle. He set off unperceived; and, when I had thrown an old shoe after him for luck, I crept back to bed, and lay there till the bell rung. When I went down there was the old story over again: Scourge wanted me to decline (as he called it) something about *Dominus, Domini*, and I had resolved to decline it altogether. He made signals to me to unbutton:—I told him I'd see him ——. No, I did not say that; but I told him I wouldn't. He came down from the quarter-deck, where he always stood in the morning, and was going to bear down upon me. I saw his manœuvres; and, just as he came, I laid hold of the leaden inkstand that belonged to

our mess, and heaved it with all my might point blank at his head. It not only hit him, but, to my astonishment, brought him down. I didn't stay to ask if he was hurt, but leaped out of the window, which I had taken the precaution to have wide open;—and this was my first step into the world.

"I need not tell you that I ran; for, when I saw the blood and the ink streaming down old Scourge's face, I thought, to be sure, that I must have killed him. I kept on at full speed; and, as my legs and my lungs were both rather better then than they are now, I soon joined Charley Russell, whom I found waiting for me at our rendezvous.

"The account which I gave him of my engagement with Scourge made him think we had better set off as soon as possible; and, the 'Liverpool Fly Coach' coming up soon afterwards, we got births aboard of her, and went on to Liverpool.

"There was a fair-spoken squinting sort of a fellow on deck alongside of us, who contrived, in the twinkling of one of his own eyes, to learn that we were two youngsters who wanted to go on board a ship. We told him some long story about our parents being dead, and so on: and he believed just as much of it as was true; and that was no great matter, you may guess. However, he said he thought he could get us a birth, and began to talk about the delights of a sailor's

life, and beating the French, and getting to be a captain of a ship, and having one's fortune made by prize-money, and other like rigmaroles, until we were both stark mad to be aboard.

"By his advice we went to lodge at the sign of the 'Admiral Benbow,' in Crooked Billet Lane, which, if you know the town of Liverpool, you'll be sure is neither so pleasant nor so genteel as Grosvenor Square, in London. Here he introduced us to an ill-looking fellow, with a wooden leg, whom he called Captain Sprit, and who, he said, was commander of the 'Lovely Sally,' a fine merchant vessel. The moment I set my eyes on this fellow, I thought, young as I was, that he must be a rascal. He wore a greasy cocked hat; his coat had belonged to a naval officer, but had suffered in the hands of some of the Jews who had owned it before it came to our new friend's turn to mount it, and it enjoyed now but a very scanty share of its original lace; a pair of mariner's canvass trowsers, made as large as a petticoat, and reaching to his knees—light blue worsted stockings, with red clocks—and a pair of pewter buckles, nearly as large as gridirons, stuck into shoes that might have fitted an elephant—composed the costume of this captain, as he chose to entitle himself. His nose was in shape like a thick mushroom, broad and flat, and spread over his face: its colour was a deep tawny red; but it was so variegated with lumps and pimples, of purple,

green, and yellow, that it looked for all the world like a bunch of withered flowers. He was beetle-browed, and wore a black patch over his left eye. His mouth was like a fish's; and one of his cheeks was constantly filled with an enormous quid of tobacco. An ancient silver brooch fastened his shirt-collar; and, as he wore no handkerchief, his ugly bull's throat, very rarely, and, at the best, very imperfectly shaved, was always exposed. His legs were as ill matched as can be imagined: for one of them was as bandy as a hoop; the other was made of a stout perpendicular piece of timber, which supplied the place of the deficient limb. He was one of the most powerful men I ever saw; and the loss of his leg seemed hardly to have impaired his strength.

"When he entered the room in which we were sitting he stared impudently at each of us; and, after he had satisfied himself with looking, he roared out 'What cheer, messmates?'

"I was quite at a loss what reply to make to this salutation; but I believed that he was some great naval officer at least, for impudence has a kind of imposing effect upon every body, to say nothing of two such lads as Charley Russell and I.

"Charley had the gift of the gab; so he got up, and made a low bow and a long speech, telling the captain how he wished to enter the navy.

"'Belike you do, brother,' said the captain,

as soon as Charley had made an end of his palaver—' Belike you do; but let me just overhaul you a bit, and see what you can do. Have you ever been aboard ship?'

"' No,' said Charley.

"' Why, then, mayhap, you can't neither hand nor reef, nor steer.'

" We were obliged again to confess we could not.

"' Nor I dare say you can't splice a rope, nor raise a perpendicular.'

" We knew just as much about finding the longitude as of doing any one of the things the captain asked us about. I felt that we were confoundedly gravelled; so I stepped up to him, and said it was true we couldn't do much, but that we were very young, and willing to learn.

"' Well said, mate!' cried the old boy; ' and, if I was to larn you, I dare say you might make a taught fellow. But you would be of no use on board a king's ship now;—they wouldn't have you at a gift.'

" This was disheartening, and seemed to be a death-blow to our hopes. Charley and I looked ruefully at each other; and I was still more frightened than Charley, because I thought I discerned a distant prospect of being hanged in case I should be caught; for that I had killed old Scourge I never dreamt of doubting.

"The captain was a cunning old thief, and saw our embarrassment, of which he was not slow in taking advantage.

"'Now,' said he, 'if you'd like a trip to the West Indies, in as pretty a ship as ever danced over the salt sea ocean, I could accommodate you.'

"I looked at Charley, and saw by the glistening of his eyes that he was delighted with this proposal. All that we wished for was to go to sea; and we did not care much as to the manner, simply because we knew nothing at all about the affair.

"'Many's the fine young fellow that I've made a good sailor of,' continued the captain; 'and, if so be you like to try a spell along with me, you'll have an opportunity of learning the craft of seamanship; whereby you may come to be a captain or an admiral, according as you behave.'

"For my part, when I heard the old rogue talk in this strain, I thought he was my guardian angel, who had taken this shape to put me in the way of happiness and fortune. Charley was not less sanguine; and, to make a long story short, we fell into the net that was spread for us. The captain called for a can of flip, and made us drink with him, sorely against our wills; but, as he said no one could ever be a sailor that wouldn't toss off his can like a man, we complied.

"When we had taken as much of this stuff as he thought sufficient for his purpose he called for some brandy, and, filling a glass for each of us, 'Now, lads,' he said, 'I'll teach you the first thing a seaman larns; that is, to splice the main brace.—Do as I do;' and he swallowed the contents of his glass at a single gulp.

"We obeyed him without hesitation, and this finished our business. We were as completely drunk as any two youngsters in Christendom. The captain then produced some papers, which he told us contained an engagement to sail with him to the West Indies, and he asked us to sign them. If we had been sober, we should not, I dare say, have refused; and, drunk as we were, we signed without looking at the papers, and without hesitation.

"'Now boys,' said the captain, 'I recommend you to turn in to your births, and take a snooze: I'll come and pipe you out of your hammocks betimes to-morrow; and then aboard the Lovely Sally, and hey for the West Indies!' After this advice he squeezed our hands in his horny palm, which was very like a bear's foot, and bade us good night.

"We got to bed as well as we could, and the next morning each of us awoke with a horrible head-ache. The thoughts, however, of the new life that we were about to begin, were so delightful to our boyish fancies, that we cared little for

this inconvenience; and, after breakfasting with our new friend, we went aboard the 'Lovely Sally.'

"Notwithstanding our inclination to view every thing in the best light, we couldn't help thinking the ship was very small, and, by the side of some of the vessels we saw in the port, a very shabby-looking concern. We had little time, however, now to reflect upon this, or any thing else, as the preparations for getting the ship out, and for sailing, gave us sufficient employment. A fresh breeze sprung up, and we soon lost sight of the shore.

"The ship's crew consisted of six men, besides our old friend of the preceding night, and a lank ill-looking person, who seemed to have a supreme authority on board. He ordered every body about; and, on his telling me to do something I didn't like, I, who was never fond of control, told him I wouldn't.

"He burst out immediately into a furious passion, and swore all kinds of sea oaths at me; threatening to be athwart my quarter if I didn't obey him. The captain was standing by, and I appealed to him.

"'Captain,' I said, 'am I to do whatever this fellow tells me?'

"'Fellow, brother! Egad you'd better not call him fellow. I'm the captain, it's true: but he's a bigger man than me; he's the admiral.' As he

said this the old villain thrust his tongue into the cheek that was not filled with tobacco, and winked at the tall man, who laughed aloud, and, swearing at me worse than before, said, if I didn't obey him, 'he'd make every beam in my body crack.'

"I was taken all aback in a moment, and began to suspect we had been trepanned. I thought it was better to take his advice, particularly when I saw the admiral, as he called him, grasp his cudgel resolutely; and so I did as I was bid. I then went in search of Charley; and, upon imparting my suspicions to him, I found that he had formed a similar opinion. To our further astonishment we made for the shore on the close of the same day; and as soon as the night had set in, and the corn, which appeared to form our cargo, had been removed, a quantity of barrels were taken from under it, and were lowered into a boat, in which the admiral, with all the crew, excepting the old captain, placed themselves, and rowed away. I then began to ask the old fellow what this meant, and why we didn't keep on our course for the West Indies.

"'West Indies!' said he;—'oh, don't be in a hurry; you're young yet, and have plenty of time to go to the West Indies before you die.'

"'Yes,' I said; 'but you know we engaged to go to the West Indies.'

"'I tell you what, brother,' said he, 'you're a

likely lad, and I'll let you into a secret. We an't going to the West Indies at all; and, if you take my advice, you'll do your work, and hold your tongue. This here Lovely Sally is a little coaster, and you're apprenticed to the owner of her for seven years: that's the owner that's gone ashore, and I'm no more a captain than you are; and we do a trifle of smuggling when we can, wherewith the captain has now gone ashore to land some brandy; and we were mainly in want of two boys, whereby I bound you apprentice to the owner; and now, whether you like it or no, you must stay.'

"My rage at this news, and at the coolness with which the old ruffian told it to me, almost choked me. But I was obliged to swallow my anger; I had not an inkstand at hand, and, if I had, his head was harder, and he was bigger, than old Scourge; besides, I could not jump out of window and run away. I could'nt say a word, but turned into my hammock, where Charley and I cried bitterly, and vowed vengeance, until we went to sleep.

"Every succeeding hour proved the truth of what the old rascal had told me, and we gave ourselves up for lost. The treatment we experienced from the villains on board was such as I won't detail, because Madam there doesn't like to hear of it; but you may fancy it was bad when I tell you that I thought old Scourge's

birch was a mere pastime to it. I found that we had got amongst a crew of free traders, who, under the pretence of carrying corn along the coast, supplied all sorts of contraband and run goods to smugglers on shore, in various parts of the kingdom.

"For nearly a year this went on, and during the whole of the time we had not the most distant chance of escaping. Whenever the ship went into port we were kept on deck, and generally down below. The owner never staid longer than was absolutely necessary, and seemed at no time so safe or so happy as when he was away from the English coast, for which I dare swear he had many good reasons. To write to our friends was impossible; and any attempt to remonstrate met with a kick or a starting from the lank owner, and some blackguard jests from old Sprit.

"In the mean time Charley and I learnt something of the business of a ship; and, as we were always ready to console each other in our difficulties, things were not so bad as they might have been. At length our fate was changed, but not much for the better.

"One morning, when we were standing off Guernsey, a sail hove in sight, which was believed to be a French privateer; and, as our owner hated those gentry worse than any thing in the world, excepting the king's cutters, we prepared to escape from her as fast as possible. This

was, however, soon found to be impracticable; and a consultation was held between the owner and the crew, in which, of course, neither Charley nor I had any share, as to what should be done.

"The privateer gained upon us; and, as we did not slacken sail, she sent a shot right through our bows. Like a thoughtless brat, as I was, I thought this was the beginning of some good fun; and, calling Charley, we went below, where there was a large old swivel gun, that had long been dismounted. This gun we carefully loaded with nails and bolts, and whatever else we could find; and, mounting it on a chest and table, and pointing it through the cabin window, we resolved to have a slap at the Frenchman, who was now coming down upon us very fast.

"If the fellows on deck had had any notion of what we were doing, they would, most likely, have been foul of us in a minute; but they were too busy in thinking of the chance they stood of being carried into a French prison and of losing the cargo—which was very valuable—to bestow a thought upon us.

"The privateer was now very near to us; and the captain of her was standing on deck, ready to take possession of his prize. Close by him stood one of those grotesque persons who are never to be seen but on board French ships; and who, although he was dressed in other respects like a sailor, wore an immensely fine powdered periwig.

"'Let us have a slap at the man in the wig,' said Charley, as he pointed the old gun towards him.

"'With all my heart,' said I; and, every thing being ready, I clapped the match to the touch-hole.

"The gun went off, and one of the bolts with which it was loaded damaged the wig at which it was aimed, by carrying away one half of it, and a great part of the wearer's head. This I learnt afterwards, for the charge was so great that the gun burst, and knocked Charley and me down upon the cabin floor, where we lay senseless, and did not recover until the 'Lovely Sally' was in the possession of the Frenchmen. The most disastrous consequence of our firing did not end here: the captain of the privateer came on board of us; and, exasperated at the loss of his officer, (for the gentleman in the wig was his lieutenant,) having ascertained who was the commander of our ship, he walked coolly up to the lank owner, and discharged a brace of bullets through his head. This being done, he asked who had fired the gun; and he was told by the crew that it had gone off by accident in the cabin; and, as a proof of it, he was shown Charley and myself, where we were lying stunned by the bursting of the gun. He believed this story, and contented himself with putting the whole of us in irons; and then, removing us on board his own ship, he carried us,

in the course of the next day, to the port of Cherbourg.

"Every one of the 'Lovely Sally's' crew, excepting Charley and I, were full of sorrow at this disaster. We could not see any reason to grieve at changing a prison on shore for a prison at sea; but, on the contrary, we were rather glad of it. Our light-heartedness gave great offence to our messmates; and this, of course, increased our mirth. Their authority was at an end, and we didn't care a rope's end for all of them put together.

"'You unnatural young dog,' said old Sprit to me, 'you haven't a drop of English blood in your veins, or you'd cry your eyes out at going to be made a slave of by these here wooden-shoed frog-eating mounseers.'

"'Captain Sprit,' said I, 'do you know who shot the Frenchman with a wig?'

"'Yes, I do, you mischievous young——.' He said something disrespectful of you, madam," said the captain, gravely, as he turned to my grandmother, "which I must not repeat.

"'Well, then,' I said, 'you know, Captain Sprit, the Lovely Sally is yours no longer, and I'm nobody's 'prentice; and, since I've killed one man, I don't mind trying to kill another if he gives me cause.'

"The captain opened his one eye as wide as two, and looked perfectly astonished. I saw,

however, that my hint had raised me in his estimation. 'You devil's imp,' he said, 'you've larnt summat since I saw you first at the Admiral Benbow.'

"'Yes, captain,' I said; 'and, if my learning shouldn't be to your taste, thank the man that taught me,'

"'And is this all the reward I'm to get, you swab?'

"'Good words, captain,' said I; 'nobody's afraid of you now, and you'd better be friends.'

"'Friends!' said he; 'I'm the best friend you ever had:—give us your hand, and let's stand by each other.'

"I shook hands with the old rogue, whose whimsicality made me like him in spite of the trick he had played us; and who, to do him justice, had saved me from many a starting at the hands of our friend who had been lately shot. We were upon a much better understanding by the time we landed; and, by way of cementing our friendship, I suppose, accident decreed that we should be locked up in the same dungeon in the prison of Cherbourg.

"None but those persons who have been in a French prison can form any notion of its horrors. I shall not distress you by telling all the miseries we endured, but leave you to guess at them when you know that we were as wretched as hard labour, little food, and that of the worst descrip-

tion, and very scanty clothing in a bitter hard winter, could make us. We resolved to escape if we could; and since Charley and I, after some months' imprisonment, had learnt so much French that we could speak it, as we thought, like the natives, we soon contrived to put our plan in execution.

"A man with a wooden leg, and, moreover, with the very conspicuous mark of a patch over one eye, is an awkward companion in a flight; but we couldn't leave old Sprit behind us. He was lowered down first from the prison window: Charley followed him; I was last. We cleared the town, and got into the open country unperceived.

"Old Sprit puffed and hobbled as well as he could; but he soon made signals, and called to us 'to heave to.'

"'I say, lads,' he cried, 'this here 'll never do. My timbers are so crank, and this jury leg of mine is such a bad 'un to sail with, that I'll be d——d if I can keep my course. If so be as how you can't ship me aboard summat, we must part cable: you can cut and run, whereby I shall be cotch'd, and taken back again.'

"If you hated a man ever so," said my uncle, stopping in his narration, "I defy you to live with him in a French prison, and afterwards to try to escape for your life together, but you must feel your heart softened a good deal towards

him. This old Sprit was, perhaps, as great a rogue as ever was not hanged, and had done us the worst turn we had ever experienced; and yet, may I be shot if we could have left him in such a stress!

"'Haul in your lee brace, captain,' said I, 'and let's come to an anchor under yon tree, where we can hold a council of war.' We there debated what was to be done, and how we should get any good by the step we had taken. Sprit's advice was to steal the first horses we could find, and make way as fast as possible from this neighbourhood to some point further up the coast. There, he thought, we should be able to get a boat by night, and take the chance of reaching England. I had no great notion of the practicability of this scheme; but I had none better to propose, and after a short rest we pursued our journey. Old Sprit's single eye was as good as many another man's pair, and he soon spied two horses in a field. We made them ours in a style that did credit to the land of our birth, 'canny Yorkshire.' Charley and I mounted one, and old Sprit the other; and, by dint of cudgelling the beasts, we had made before day-break, as we thought, a pretty good voyage. Of course we did not keep the main road, but stuck to the cross ways and the fields. When the sun got up we thought it was not prudent to keep on, and, the beasts being jaded, we turned them loose,

to find the way home as well as they could, while we went into a thick wood to rest, and to hide ourselves until night.

"We had not eaten since supper-time the night before, and the short commons in a French prison is the best whet to a man's appetite that ever was invented. Old Sprit had only one quid, which he offered to part with us; but we had not then acquired a relish for tobacco. We lay grumbling until evening, when our hunger was so great that we resolved to run all risks to get food, and we set off for a small town which we had discovered at about two miles distant. We hadn't a coin of any description; but this did not discourage us.

"'If so be as we are obligated,' said Sprit, 'you know we must bilk the landlord unless he'll take our words for the money when the ship's paid; wherewith,' he added, with a chuckle, 'I think he'll have to wait for a blue moon. But never mind that, my hearts! When a man's hungry he must eat, or else how's he to keep his hulk afloat? and I know I won't go without my mess while I can get one of these mounseers to sarve it out to me.'

"We entered the town, and made our way to a decent, but humble, sort of cabaret, where Charley, who talked French better than either of us, called for something to eat. There were several persons in the room, who looked at us, I thought, rather suspectingly.

"The landlady asked where we came from.—Charley replied 'that we were Germans, and, having been bred to the watchmaking trade, we were on our way to Geneva, in search of employment.' This account, which Charley rattled off very glibly, seemed to be believed, and some soup was set upon our table, at which we fell to most vigorously.

"Sprit, who had stood staring all the while the colloquy was going on between the landlady and Charley, asked me what they said; and I explained to him the meaning of the conversation.

"'Come,' says he, 'that's a good-un, howsomever. So the old bum-boat woman takes me for a Jarman! Love my heart, what fools these here mounseers be, good Lord!' and the old fellow chuckled again at what he thought the egregious folly of the landlady.

"We ate the soup, and some cold meat which was brought in after it, in a manner that astonished our hostess. Old Sprit made himself entirely happy with a brandy-bottle; and at every gulp (and they were pretty numerous) abused the wine, which he said was worse than the purser's small beer. Our feast being ended, we began to talk about the expediency of effecting a retreat, and the way in which it should be managed, when an accident happened which put an end to our anxiety on this score.

"Sprit was sitting with his face to the door, and I was opposite to him. On a sudden I saw his extraordinary phiz undergo a remarkable alteration. He stared, and screwed up his mouth, while his hand grasped the knife he had been eating with. Before I could ask him what was the matter, he growled out, in a low tone, 'Shiver my timbers if we an't boarded!'

"I looked round, and saw three soldiers standing in the door-way, with their muskets pointed towards us. At each of the windows was another; and they all cried at once '*A bas les armes!*' meaning, I suppose, old Sprit's knife.

"'Put down the knife, captain,' I said.

"'I suppose I must,' said he: 'we can't cut and run, so we must strike.'

"We learnt afterwards that some person in the room heard and understood Sprit's English, and gave information against us.

"The soldiers, who entered immediately, bound us, and we marched off. I consoled myself with the reflection that this had happened after instead of before dinner; and old Sprit was delighted at coming away without paying the 'old bumboat woman, who took him for a Jarman.' Vanity was not often to be found in the old man's list of weaknesses; but he had a great contempt for all the people in the world excepting Englishmen; and he could not help adding 'as if I didn't look

another guess thing from a d——d foreigner'—the latter appellation being, in his notion, the most contemptuous that the language afforded.

"We were marched to the little sea-port of Biche, which was the nearest place, and confined for several days in the prison of the fort. The commandant, however, was a good-tempered man, who liked to be surrounded by a great many servants; and as he saw we could answer his purpose in this way, while he would have nothing to pay us, and as our escape he thought was nearly impossible, he used to employ us in all sorts of work. Among other duties, as we were known to be sailors, we were made to row his boat, with some of his own people, when he went out upon litlte pleasure excursions, of which he was very fond. Old Sprit's skill in steering and managing the boat gave him a high place in the favour of the commandant, and he soon came to be intrusted with the helm.

"Things might have been worse with us: we were tolerably well fed, and not too much worked; but we were prisoners, and this went sadly against our stomachs.

"The old fellow came to me one day, and, leading me into a quiet corner, where we could not be overheard, asked me 'if I'd like to lend a hand at escaping.' I replied 'that I would willingly, and run all chances.'

"'Why, my master,' said he, 'you *must* run

chances; for, if we don't escape, I think they'll make us slip our wind: because why? we can't try without hurting the mounseers a little.'

"'Well,' I said, 'what is your plan?'

"'Why,' said he, 'I've told Charley already, and he agrees, and would have come with me; but we three must not be seen consorting together. My scheme is as this here: we're a going out to-day for a sail in the commandant's yawl. The old governor won't go; but young master Varment, his nephew, has set his heart upon a sail, and Captain Jerry Dean is to go with him. You and two of the captain's men are to go for to row the boat back, 'cause the wind blows off shore. Now you see, mate, there's three of us, and four of the mounseers; and its d——d hard if we can't lick 'em. You're only boys, it's true; but then you're taught little fellows, and I've had the handling of you, which isn't the same as if you'd been larnt by another. When I was not so old as you I was rated on the ship's books, and fit like a man.'

"'Well, captain,' said I, interrupting him, 'so will I fight like a man, if I have a chance,'

"'Well said, my chicken!' said the old fellow, slapping my back. 'Now here it is, look ye!—I've got two brace of pistols out of the governor's gun-room. Charley's got one—there's another for you—and the others I'll keep in my own breeches pockets for when time shall sarve.

Well—we'll go aboard. I shall be at the helm, and the captain and mounseer will be any where they like, and you'll have the other two frog-eaters on the thwarts before you and Charley. I'll steer 'em right away from land; and, if this breeze lasts, we shan't be long making a good course. Then, when they want to come back, we must hoist our colours. Do you take care of the two men; and, if I don't sarve out the masters, my name a'nt Sprit: only, when you see me fall to, do you go to work; and if I get the boat once in my hands, and this here wind blows, we'll be ashore in Old England before four-and-twenty hours are gone, or else I'm d——d out in my reckoning.'

"I can't say this was a very certain or satisfactory prospect to me; but the wish to escape was so strong, that I would have run even greater risks; and the pistols Sprit had stolen were a great comfort to me.

"We went on board just in the manner directed by the old fellow. Monsieur Valmont and Captain Girardin were two of the greatest coxcombs I ever knew. One of their friends met them just as they were about to embark, and was strongly pressed to accompany them, but he refused.

"'*Mais mon brave*,' said he to the captain, 'how can you trust yourself with these English prisoners?'

"The captain put his hand to his sword, and, with a look of ineffable conceit, said 'he felt himself quite safe under the protection of that good friend: besides,' he said, 'don't you observe, *mon cher*, that these English prisoners consist only of an old man with a wooden leg, and two little boys?'

"His persuasions were in vain; and, the friend positively refusing to accompany him, we set sail.

"It was a delightful morning, and we had gone about two leagues from the shore, when Monsieur Valmont wished to put back. The captain opposed this; and a dispute about the distance from land ensued. The captain told me to ask Sprit how far it was, which I did; and he gravely answered 'that we were about half a league distant.' The captain then approached the old fellow, and began to talk the little English he knew, of which Sprit didn't understand a word, but kept answering 'Anan, mounseer,' and 'Ay, ay, sir,' to every observation and question.

"'Keep your eye upon the weather-gage, and look out for squalls,' he said to me, in an under tone, by which I knew he was about to prepare for action.

"The dispute between Monsieur Valmont and the captain was continued with all the vehemence and gesticulation which Frenchmen use in talking about trifles. The captain swore that the shore was so near that he could swim to it.

"'What does he say?' asked Sprit, as the captain was standing close by him, looking through a glass.

"'He says he could swim ashore,' I replied.

"'Does he?' said the old fellow; and with the rapidity of lightning he seized the captain in his arms, as a nurse would a child, and tossed him overboard, exclaiming, at the same moment, 'Why then, d——n his eyes, let him go and try! Jack's alive!' he shouted, as he threw down monsieur, and put his wooden leg upon him, by way of checking his motions—the sight of his pistols, in the mean time, operating upon the Frenchman's nerves.

"Charley and I had not been idle. The two French sailors were on the thwart before us, and it took little trouble to pull them on their backs. The sight of our pistols, and the defenceless posture to which we had reduced them, prevented the fellows from offering any resistance, and they only cried for mercy.

"Sprit tied Monsieur Valmont hand and foot, and afterwards relieved us of our charge by performing the same office for the sailors. He then seized the helm again, and, putting the boat before the wind, which luckily continued favorable, he made good his promise, by carrying us in safety to Port St. Pierre, in Guernsey. We brought Monsieur Valmont and the two sailors to England, where they were detained for a short time,

till a change of prisoners was effected. What became of the captain I really can't tell:—perhaps he did swim ashore—perhaps he was picked up—perhaps—— But that's all the fortune of war.

"I went home and found that I was supposed to be dead, and that the mourning my friends had worn for me had long expired. My liking for the sea still remaining very strong, my relations thought it wasn't worth while to oppose my inclinations; and to my great joy Charley Russell and I were both appointed midshipmen on board the Catamaran sloop of war. We sailed together for seven years. He was a kind-hearted lad—brave as a lion when fighting was the word, but a little of a spoony, as we sailors thought, at all other times. He didn't like grog nor tobacco, and was as lazy as a negro except when he was obliged to work. He was too fond of book-learning to make a thorough seaman: old Scourge had spoilt him.

"He was loved by every body on board, notwithstanding he had a little dash of the milk-and-water in his composition. In any body but Charley this would have been unbearable; but somehow or other, he made every soul in the ship, from the captain down to the mess-boy, his stanch friend, and any of them would have gone to the devil for him: and yet, with all his mildness, Charley was as fond of a joke as any

man. He used to delight in humbugging the chaplain, and thought he played him a trick by putting a double dose of rum into his grog; but, Lord love you! the parson enjoyed that joke; and, if it would have given Charley any satisfaction, he might have made his reverence's grog all rum, without ever giving him offence.

"Well, you see Charley was given to writing and reading; and, when he lost his number"——

"Lost what, uncle?" said Elizabeth.

"Lost his number, my love," replied the captain with great gravity.

"But do, pray, tell us what losing his number means."

"Why it means that he died, to be sure. I thought every body knew what a man's losing his number meant."

"But to die, you know, uncle, is to lose one's life, not one's number," said Elizabeth, who knew very well what the old gentleman meant, but who was delighted at any opportunity of getting him into a definition, at which, it must be confessed, he was never very brilliant.

"Yes, my love, so it is;—but it's a great pity you don't understand these things; though, I declare, I don't know how you should. Well, ask and learn; that's the way to know, to be sure. Why you see, Elizabeth, each of the men belonging to a mess have a number, and their portions

are served out to them according to those numbers; so, if a man should lose his number, why he'd lose his mess, and that's a thing he never could do while he had breath: therefore, you see, losing his number is, as you say, just the same thing as losing his life. In short, my love, it means the same as sticking his spoon in the wall."

"Well, and why does he stick his spoon in the wall?"

"Why because he can't help it," said the captain, with a loud laugh at his niece's ignorance, and perfectly unconscious that every body present was enjoying the manner in which the arch girl was drawing him out.

"But pray do explain to us, uncle, about sticking a spoon in the wall."

"You must be rather thick-headed, I do think, love," said the captain, "not to understand that. You see, when a man's mess is served out to him, he whips his spoon out of his pocket, and falls to without delay. After this explanation, I suppose I need not tell you that, while a man has any thing to do in this world, he would never think of parting with his spoon. Now d'ye understand it?"

"Oh, yes; and thank you for the trouble you have taken, uncle."

"I think," said Harry, "it is as ingenious a pe-

riphrasis for a man's giving up the ghost as ever I heard."

"I wish you'd talk English, Harry," said the captain; "because, when you give us that outlandish stuff, how can I tell whether you are not saying something disrespectful about our sea phrases? and that is a thing which, you know, I would not allow."

"Indeed, sir," said Harry, "I admire them so much, and am, besides, so grateful to you for the kind manner in which you have taken my turn, that I should be very sorry to offend either. What I said was very respectful."

"Likely," said the captain, who was soon pacified. "But this story that I'm going to give you was written by poor Charley Russell, and found among his papers after he died. Charley had no relations at all that ever I heard of; so, as I was his messmate, I took charge of all he had, and this among the rest. Poor fellow! he was shot right through the head on the glorious 1st of June, and fell into my arms. He died without a moment's pain, as well as I can guess. But, come, I'm chattering instead of giving you the story. Now silence—I am going to begin: but, first of all, I should tell you that I believe Charley picked this story up, or the main part, from an old French priest, who in his youth had been a kind of missionary among the Chinese;

and, although Charley used to believe every word the old fellow told him, I must own that I didn't; and I think some part of this story mayn't be quite so true as it should be; but, such as it is, here you have it."

The captain then produced his manuscript, and began to read.

THE FEAST OF LANTERNS.

My Uncle's Story.

Upon the 15th of the first moon (Yun Seaou) the flower-painted lanterns shine through the whole night.

LALLA-ROOKH.

THE FEAST OF LANTERNS.

ABOUT three thousand eight hundred years before the vulgar era of the creation of the world the celestial empire of China was governed by Xo Fi. He was, though a young man, of great wisdom; his face and figure were of the rarest beauty; and so prodigious was his strength, that he could break iron with the mere force of his arm—or his courtiers lied. He was a kind and generous ruler over his people, and was universally beloved. He had one failing, and but one—though that was of such a nature that it not unfrequently led him into the commission of imprudences which his virtue and his good sense would equally have forbidden—he was too apt to yield to the impulses of his passion, and to suffer his reason to slumber. His palace displayed such a collection of splendour and delight as surpasses the cold imaginations of peo-

ple born in this degenerate age. The floors were of beaten silver, over which were spread carpets of the richest fabric; the walls were built of aromatic woods, and the most costly silks and muslins hung against them in profuse drapery. Perfumes, so exquisite that they elevated the senses beyond the earth and its impurities, formed the atmosphere of this delightful abode. His haram was filled with the most enchanting beauties: from every part of the globe the fairest women had been collected, and here their concentrated charms crowned all the other fascinations of this earthly paradise. From morning to night the songs of these charmers whiled away the lingering hours, and even midnight was made radiant by their beauties. Here, then, joy and pleasure reigned in an eternal variety.

The young king's education had been superintended by the principal of the bonzes, a man to whom all the secrets of nature were perfectly familiar: the elements were at his command, and all the spirits which people them did his bidding like household slaves. He beheld with much anxiety the devotions of the young monarch to these enervating luxuries; and still more was he disturbed at the irascibility of his constitution. He remonstrated with him upon his indolence, and the unlimited indulgence of his passions: but youth is deaf to reason; and the ladies of the seraglio told him that the bonze was an old fool.

The king coincided in the judgment of the ladies; and the bonze was dismissed from the court, with a civil intimation that his presence was no longer welcome. The old gentleman had, moreover, become unpopular from his having discountenanced a cruel, and, as it turned out, a disastrous war with a neighbouring nation; the only pretence for which was the manner in which each of the belligerent parties wore their hair, and which the other thought was damnable and heretical. The bonze had been so indiscreet as to say "that it was better for the people to consent to cut off their hair than to provoke the chance of their foes cutting off their heads;" and for this saying he had fallen, as it must be confessed he deserved to do, into very just and general odium. The old man retired to his sanctuary a little surprised, but with as grave a visage as his philosophy would permit him to assume. The prince continued to lead the same life of enjoyment; and, in the recesses of his seraglio, soon forgot the bonze, his advice, and the obligations he was under to him.

One morning he strolled into the magnificent gardens which surrounded his palace, and where art had been so luxuriantly employed that the seasons were subdued to its will. The fruits of autumn loaded the branches in the summer, and the richest flowers of the spring blossomed throughout the year. Upon one of the loveliest

of this garden's banks reclined a female form; and the king, supposing it to be one of the ladies of his haram, approached, designing to surprise her with the bliss of his presence; when, to his astonishment, he found that it was a person unknown to him.

She slept:—he leaned over her with breathless delight; for she surpassed all that he had yet beheld of female beauty. Her light locks sported in the soft morning breeze; her cheek lay, as she slept, upon a blushing flower, which, though of the rarest beauty, was yet inferior to her breathing charms. Her mouth, half opened, displayed teeth which put to shame all his oriental treasures for brilliancy, and exceeded the most delicate ivory in whiteness: a soft smile played upon her features, and spoke the serenity of her soul.

The prince hung over her delighted and enamoured: he stooped down, and, with the air of a man whose very caresses were somewhat of a condescension, he was about to imprint a kiss upon the rosy half-open lips, when an ugly withered hand was interposed, and he had barely time to prevent the intended kiss being bestowed upon it. He started, and beheld a dwarfish old woman, with a face of the most hideous description, to which a mixed expression of malice and cunning gave a disgusting appearance, and rendered the ugliness of her features

still more revolting. The very few teeth which time had spared to her stuck out, and showed like discoloured fangs upon her withered lower lip; her hand, which had so nearly received an honour never intended for it, was more like the paw of a beast than any thing human, and long nails, like the talons of a bird, adorned it. Her figure was diminitive; her back curved, and rising above her shoulders. She was dressed in an odd garb of black cloth, upon which many fantastic symbols were depicted. The anger which the prince felt disposed to give way to was checked by a sense of awe as he regarded this strange unearthly figure,

"Mighty father of the earth!" cried she, with a most reverend and humble inclination of her deformed body, "this sleeping maiden is my slave: no mortal has yet tasted the honey of her virgin lip; nor shall any one in this realm, where property is held sacred under the laws of a just monarch."

"What price will purchase her?" cried the infatuated youth.

"Fifty thousand purses of gold," replied the crone.

"Then she is mine!" exclaimed the king, in transport, as he caught her in his arms, and was about to complete his first purpose, when the grasp of the withered hand again prevented him.

"The purses!" said the old woman.

"They shall be paid to you."

"I trust not a debtor's memory; you may forget."

"I have said it," cried the king, in anger.

"But do it," rejoined the importunate old woman.

"Beldame, begone!" said the sovereign, taking off a ring: "give this to my treasurer, who will pay you."

"The purses!" repeated the old lady, rejecting his ring.

The king, carried away by his passion, made a blow at her, which would probably have demolished her; but, to his surprise, he struck only the empty air; whilst the hag, standing at his opposite ear, roared again "The purses!" He struck again, but still as vainly as before; and when, exhausted with rage and his exertions, he threw himself into a seat, the elastic beldame repeated in a whisper "The purses!"

"Come with me, then," said the king, rising, and hurrying into the palace, while the hag hobbled after him.

The monarch summoned his treasurer, who, accompanied by twenty porters and fifty thousand purses, appeared with that rapidity which his well-known impetuosity had rendered habitual. He ordered the gold to be delivered to the old woman, who, receiving it in her lap, was about to speak, when, his patience being utterly exhausted

by the coolness of her demeanour, he very ungallantly ordered her to be kicked forth.

The treasurer, his porters, and forty black eunuchs, proceeded with the velocity of lightning to execute his commands: sixty-one feet were raised in attitude to kick; and in that attitude did they remain, frigid and fixed. The king found himself under the influence of some resistless power, and attempted, but in vain, to do that which he had ordered his attendants to perform. His limbs refused their office, and he foamed with rage; while the beldame, with a provoking indifference, went on to count her purses.

When she had done she took the treasurer's staff of office out of his hand, and, having made a solemn obeisance to the king, and kissed her hand to the treasurer, she seated herself on it very gracefully, saddlewise, and soared out of an open window into the air. As she disappeared the kickers recovered the use of their legs, and gave instant proof of it by running with all expedition, and wild with terror, out of the hall.

The king was too much occupied with the thought of his charming purchase to dwell upon this mark of disrespect, but rushed back to the bank where he had left her lying. She was still in the same posture; and, the witch being no longer at hand, he imprinted an ardent kiss upon the lovely lips which had so much fascinated him.

He started back, for he found they were as

cold as marble, and that the beautiful form was inanimate as a corpse. Indeed, but for the gracefulness and ease of her posture, he would have thought she was really dead: no respiration heaved her bosom, whiter than that of a swan. He laid a rose-leaf upon her lips, but it moved not; he clasped her in his arms, and embraced only a cold substance. The prince saw that he was the dupe of some magical delusion, and he heaped loud and bitter curses upon the authors of it.

When he had recovered from the first paroxysm of his rage he ordered his attendants to carry the fair inanimate to the haram. Here she was laid upon a couch, and the distracted prince hung over her in despair. Days passed, and he still remained in the same spot, watching in vain for her awaking.

At length he observed, upon the belt of the girdle which bound her gauze robe, some characters which he could not comprehend. He instantly summoned all the wise men of the realm, the bonzes and mandarins, with the philosophers of all kinds, to decipher them. They met, and were puzzled; and, as none of them knew any thing of the matter, they hazarded various opinions, and then abused each other for their conjectures. This was the practice with all of them but the chief mandarin, who said he doubted, and would take time to consider; by which pru-

dent proceeding he saved himself from the shame of exposing his ignorance.

At length the emperor was told of a devotee of singular piety and mortification of life, who travelled from town to town in a sort of open sedan chair, the seat of which was filled with sharp nails, on which he constantly sate for the good of the souls of the faithful; and, in return for this sacrifice, he implored the charity of the righteous. To him every thing was said to be known; and his piety, it was believed, had drawn down inspiration. He was consulted; and, after hearing the conflicting opinions of the wise men, and shaking his head at each, he read with great fluency the inscription, which he rendered into an exhortation to the emperor to sit upon a board covered with sharp nails. Nothing but the reputation of the sanctity of a particular part of this gentleman's person prevented the emperor from treating him as he would have treated the old woman who rode away with the treasurer's staff of office; but some ill fate seemed always to frustrate his majesty's kicking propensities, and the devotee was suffered to depart unhurt.

The king dismissed his councillors, and at length thought of his early tutor, the bonze, whose knowledge, he believed, was greater than that of all his kingdom. He immediately sent for him, and implored him, by the affection he had formerly manifested, to extricate him from

the misery into which his passion had plunged him.

After examining the characters, the bonze said, with an undisturbed air, " Potent and beloved monarch, the inscription contains the same caution which I formerly ventured to give your majesty, and for which I was so unhappy as to incur your displeasure;—to repeat it would be to increase the weight of your anger."

" But is there no way," cried the monarch, " of awaking the maiden ?"

" Yes," replied the bonze, " but it is fraught with peril to your gracious person."

" Tell it me, nevertheless," answered the prince.

" If your majesty will favour me with your royal commands under your own seal, and an unqualified pardon to me for whatever consequences may ensue, I will obey : otherwise I am silent."

The king did not hesitate to comply with these conditions, and by his direction the state lawyers prepared a warrant for the bonze's disclosure of the secret; which, as they were compelled to avoid all useless repetitions, was perfectly explicit: and in this respect, perhaps, it is the only legal document made since the beginning of the world which does not admit of two interpretations. When it was sealed the bonze read as follows:—" Beware of the storm of passion !—

The sleeper will awake when the knot which confines her hair shall be unbound:—but pause; for, the first time thine eyes, Xo Fi, shall behold the light of day, after the enchantment shall be dissolved, thou wilt be deprived of thy throne."

The king's hand was stretched out to unloose the fatal knot, when the bonze arrested it, and the chief mandarin urged the necessity of deliberation; but the king vowed he would lose life and power rather than forego the possession of that beauty which alone could make them endurable.

The chief mandarin, who was versed in all the subtilties of the law, and who had a great talent at making any plain and obvious words bear a meaning very different from that which they were intended to convey, thought some method might be adopted of evading the prediction, or of averting it until the means of appeasing the powers by whom it was wrought should have been hit upon. It was by acting constantly upon this principle that he had attained the first rank in his profession; and he had made his fame and his fortune solely by his skill in delay.

"For example," said he, "if the emperor should have his palace and gardens lighted with lamps, and exclude the beams of the sun"——

The king threw himself upon the necks of the mandarin and the bonze, calling them his fathers

and preservers. The chief mandarin had a facility in shedding tears—so he wept for joy; but the bonze only shook his head, for he was a philosopher.

Orders were immediately issued for the preparation of a palace which should exclude the light of heaven, and in which the soft blaze of aromatic lamps should shed a more beautiful illumination than that of the sun. In the empire of China, at this time, the will of the monarch was promptly followed by its execution. This was the golden age for kings; but it has passed away, and does not now seem likely to return in China, or in any other places.

A costly pavilion was stretched over a beautiful garden: instead of windows, the most exquisite paintings were placed round the saloon, which presented a panoramic view of a fairy country; and the lamp-light aided a delusion which was so strong as to mock every sense but that of touch.

As soon as it was completed the enamoured monarch ordered the sleeping beauty to be carried thither, and, rushing with all the impetuosity which ardent love could add—if, indeed, any thing could add to his inflammable temperament—he eagerly embraced her. After gazing for a moment he unbound her beautiful tresses: her eye-lids slowly opened, animation seemed to return to her frame, and with it her beauty

faded like a dream. Her eyes turned green; her nose, which was before of the most delicate beauty, sank flattened to her cheeks, which were as suddenly puffed out; her ivory teeth became black and uneven; while the once rich jetty locks, in the curls of which his fingers still played, were as red as a fox's tail! Xo Fi turned away enraged and disgusted, when a loud laugh was heard through the slender walls of the pavilion, and he recognised the infernal chuckle of the old hag who had thus duped him. Without casting another look upon the altered maiden, who could no longer be called *dear* to him but in the light of a purchase, he rushed out, resolved to tear the witch limb-meal. By dint of his prodigious strength he dashed down the frail partition, and soon found himself in the garden.

He looked round for the old woman, but in vain: he thought he beheld her ugly form gliding behind a thicket, and he darted towards it: in his anger he tore down the clustering blossoms, but his search was useless; she was not there, though her discordant voice still rang in his ear.

While he was employed in demolishing the arbour of roses in this fruitless search the chief gardener came up, and saluted him with a smart blow from a spade which he carried, crying out, at the same moment, "Cursed slave! what has

induced thee thus to destroy my roses, and the emperor's favorite tree ?"

The king turned upon him, and, seizing the poor gardener by the neck and one leg, was about to hurl him away with as much ease as a man would lift a dog, when, his eye happening to fall upon the sleeve of his dress, he found himself in the garb of the lowest order of his people. He stopped, as if struck by lightning, and, letting the trembling wretch fall, he remained in stupid amazement. He looked around, but beheld nothing save the gardens, and the palace in the distance ;—no traces of the pavilion were to be seen. He examined his person, which seemed strangely altered for the worse : his hands were hard and discoloured ; his legs, once the envy of all his courtiers, and the admiration of all his ladies, were wickedly bandy. He put his hand to his beard, and found, instead of that grateful cluster of descending curls which formerly decorated it, only a few harsh bristles.

It is impossible to say how long he might have remained in the state of stupor, into which these afflicting discoveries had plunged him, but for the return of the gardener. This cunning rogue, as soon as he was extricated from the grasp of the metamorphosed monarch, picked himself slily up, and withdrew gently until out of his reach, when he set off in a full run to fetch the guard. He told them, as well as his fright and the state

of his lungs would permit, how he had caught a vagabond tearing down the king's roses, who had answered his remonstrance by threatening to murder him. The guard arrived, and, without ceremony seizing the mighty monarch, by dint of hauling and kicking his sacred, but changed person, soon dragged him to the gate, out of which they pushed him. He raved, swore he was their sovereign, and threatened them with death by unheard-of lingering tortures, for which they first repaid him with blows, but at which they afterwards laughed. The king's rage continued, and it was increased by perceiving that, in spite of all his exertions, he continued to utter his menaces and reproaches in the most vulgar dialect of China.

At length, when he had nearly exhausted himself, and the joke began to seem somewhat too long for the guards, a porter came up, who cried out, "Well met, Fong! thy wife has been seeking thee; and, as thou didst not come home to thy morning's meal, she has prepared a breakfast of bamboo for thee."

The king stared, but said nothing; he could not believe that the threat of a wife and a bamboo had any relation to him.

"Who is this fellow?" cried one of the guards to the porter.

"Don't you know poor Fong?" was the reply:

" he is a silly fellow, who has got a shrew for a wife, as his sore bones and empty belly often testify; eh, Fong?"

Poor King Fong made no reply, but, with a mind distracted between grief and amazement, he turned away, amidst the shouts of the soldiery. As he wandered slowly away he observed a little bustling woman before him, who was nearly as broad as she was long, clad in the coarsest garments; and her sleeve, being tucked up to the shoulder, exposed her muscular arm, which was, in point of dimension, much more like a man's thigh than any thing else. At the end of it her ox-fist clutched a piece of bamboo, the sight of which filled the late king with an anxiety almost amounting to terror, for which he could not account. A sudden turn of the street brought them opposite to each other: no sooner did the little woman behold him than her small red eyes twinkled with new fires.

" Idle dog!" cried she, " there you are, eh?" accompanying each monosyllable with a stroke of her baton, as an orator beats the table for the purpose of giving effect to his eloquence.

Fong, who had not been long enough married to endure such discipline, seized her arm, and endeavored to wrest the stick from her; but he might as well have endeavored to overthrow a bull: the double-jointed quean set her knee

against his leg, and, giving him at the same time an adroit twist, laid him upon his back: she then knelt upon the pit of his stomach, and, having, as it must be allowed, somewhat the best of the fight, she continued the beating, which his intractability had interrupted, occasionally ceasing her blows, and applying her rhetoric.

The lady was gifted with uncommon volubility, and rated him soundly for deserting his family and idling away his time. When she had talked to a certain pitch she cried; then fell to beating him; and then rated him again; ending every reproach, and enforcing every blow, with "And then to fly into a passion! that's the worst, and what, you know, I hate. How often have I told you, Fong, that I hate people who are passionate? How many scrapes has it already led you into! It may be the cause of your death some day, and then what is to become of me and your poor children?" And here she wept again; but in a few minutes, resuming the bamboo exercise, she added, "But I'll cure you of your passionate tricks, or I'll know the reason on't."

At length, tired with her eloquence and exertion, she raised herself from poor Fong's chest, upon which she had been sitting like a nightmare, and assisted him to rise. He was so much exhausted with the discipline he had undergone, and the change to which he found himself subjected, that he was incapable of resistance, and

was led by his little new wife to a small hovel in the neighbourhood, where he found five ragged children, who honored him with the tender appellation of father. His wife, who seemed to relax somewhat of her severity, set before him food of the coarsest kind, which she invited him to eat, hinting at the same time, according to the custom of some wives, that it was much more than he deserved. He fell to, for the events of the morning had not deprived him of appetite; and, having finished, his wife pointed to a load which stood before the door, and bade him carry it to the house of a certain merchant, at the other end of the city. He demurred; indeed he swore he would not carry it, his courage returning now that his hunger was appeased; when his wife, holding up the bamboo, said, "What! you're going to be in a passion again, are you?" Fong took the hint and the burden, and carried the latter whither he was bid.

He soon discovered that his new trade was that of a porter; and as his food, and the treatment he met with from his strong-armed wife, depended upon his diligence, he continued to labour in this vocation until he was tolerably used to it. It would be tedious to relate all the passionate airs he gave himself, and all the beatings his wife gave him in recompense for them. He found, however, that she was industrious and affectionate, and he became by degrees

fond of her too. "Misery acquaints a man with strange bedfellows;" and as poor Fong was no longer powerful, and in point of beauty was even inferior to his little wife, he embraced her and his fate with as good a grace as he could, and, in the course of two years, found that his family, instead of five, consisted of seven children. He continued his labours, and discovered that hard work and hard fare had altered the fiery nature of his constitution so much, that even his wife's remonstrances had become less frequent, and his acquaintance with the bamboo was now merely a distant one.

It has been said truly enough by a Chinese philosopher, and the saying has been adopted by the sages of other polite nations, "that there is no state so humble as not to have its grievances, anxieties, and difficulties, equal in number and in weight to those which burden the highest condition of society." It is the lot of humanity; and the porter Fong was not exempt from it any more than the potent Xo Fi had been. Fong was delighted, as a father must be, at the increase of his family; but he was as miserable too as a father must be when he made the discovery that his utmost exertions could not provide them with bread.

Children are naturally noisy; and, when there is nothing to stop their mouths with, the noise becomes reasonable enough on their parts, but

infinitely vexatious to those who are obliged to hear them; and Fong was exactly in this latter predicament.

Their necessities gave rise to many consultations between Fong and his wife. The little woman was not of an unkind temper; and, although she had an excellent knack of handling the bamboo, she was not so unreasonable as to exercise it because poor Fong's unremitting labour failed to produce enough to supply his family with food. She rather set about discovering some means of remedying the evil which beset them. She considered and rejected a thousand different projects which suggested themselves to her; but, at length, she hit upon one to which *she* saw no objection; and, although she anticipated some on the part of her husband, she did not doubt that she should be able to remove his scruples.

Notwithstanding the vigilance of the chief mandarin, a system of corruption prevailed in the execution of justice, by which wealthy malefactors were enabled to evade the punishment which the laws had provided for their offences. When such persons as these were condemned to the bastinado, they were in the habit of procuring some needy wretches, who would rather endure any pain than that of poverty, to undergo, instead of them, the stripes they had been ordered to receive.

By an understanding with the officers of justice this was not difficult to be managed; but, as men do not like to be bastinadoed if they can avoid it, the substitutes were scarce, and these vicarious criminals commanded a high price in the market. Fong's wife thought of this, and saw at once the means of providing for her starving children.

It happened that, at this time, Yam Quam, a notorious peculator, who was at least as rich as he was wicked, had been condemned by the supreme court of judicature to several days of successive scourging, for the good of his soul, and for the sake of example to all the rest of the people within the dominions.

The government of China was a humane and paternal one; and, having a great aversion to shedding the blood even of criminals who deserved death, they preferred sentencing them to a punishment which, if they happened to survive, (and that they should do so was pretty nearly impossible,) made them better during the remainder of their lives.

Yam Quam had been sentenced to four successive doses of the bastinado, in the humane belief that he could not survive the second; for, when the bastinado is administered in good earnest, it is likely enough to prove mortal. Three of these four days of discipline had already passed; and as, of his three substitutes, two had

died, and the third had every prospect of remaining a cripple during the rest of his life, Yam Quam found it not a little difficult to provide a fourth, and his offers were immense. Fong's wife learnt this; and, having bargained with the criminal himself to furnish a substitute for twenty purses, she came home to tell her husband of it.

Fong was horror-stricken at the mention of her proposal, and in plain Chinese told her that nothing should induce him to ratify the bargain she had made.

Mrs. Fong burst into a flood of tears—the approved custom for married ladies who wish to carry a difficult point; and, with a multitude of tender reproaches, besought him not to hesitate at any sacrifice to prevent his dear children from dying of starvation.

Fong was as good a father—and so he told his wife—as any in China. There was nothing, in reason, he would not do for his children's sake; but he could not make up his mind to provoke his death—and a death which was as horrible as it was certain—by the means his wife proposed.

Mrs. Fong redoubled her persuasions, and Fong's refusal acquired, if possible, a more determined tone. At length Mrs. F. who was not a woman to be trifled with when she had set her mind on any thing, told Fong he *must*. "If it's the beating alone you dread, Fong," said she

rising, and drawing from its recess her own bamboo, which, from long disuse, was covered with cobwebs, "you will not avoid that by your refusal, for I flatter myself that I can strike as hard a blow as any executioner in our celestial empire; and I swear by Cham Ti, (a solemn oath!) that you shall know no respite from my bamboo until my children have bread. So now, Fong, you may choose whether you will be beaten by me and get nothing for it, or be beaten by the officers and have twenty purses."

This was a new way of putting the case—a style of reasoning against which Fong had nothing to say. He knew Mrs. F. was not a woman to be trifled with, and he knew too that she was every way capable of keeping her word. He saw that it was his fate to die of a beating; and he thought, therefore, he might as well ensure his children bread as be killed gratis. After a little further discussion, for the purpose of keeping up his marital dignity, and to save himself from the appearance of being influenced by his wife's bamboo, he acquiesced, and set about preparing for his martyrdom.

Just at this moment, however, an old bonze, who directed the spiritual affairs of the Fong family, came into their cottage. He had heard some part of the altercation between Fong and his wife by listening at the key-hole—a common practice with his reverence; and, wishing to

be further satisfied, he entered the hovel. In answer to his inquiries, Mrs. F. who had nothing to conceal from so pious a man and so good a friend, told him the dreadful straits to which they were reduced, and the expedient they had just hit upon for extricating themselves.

The bonze looked wise; and, after rubbing his hand several times round his head—a practice which in China implies profound thought—he told them he could suggest an expedient, which, without any of the inconveniences which Fong so much dreaded, presented equal pecuniary advantages. The couple listened with the utmost attention to the good man while he explained to them that on the next day a solemn festival was to be celebrated, at a sacred spot, about a league distant from the city, by the bonzes of the college to which he belonged, in honour of the god Tien Tchu; and that he wanted a person who would stand on the top of a machine, which was erected for this purpose, and remain there in sight of the people during the whole day. For this service, trifling as it seemed to be, he was ready, he said, to give Fong as much money as was offered by Yam Quam to undergo his bastinado.

Fong was overjoyed at this offer, and embraced it without hesitation. The little woman was ready to go out of her wits for joy when the bonze gave her one purse as earnest of his inten-

tions, and she flew to procure bread with it for her famishing children. Fong promised to be with the bonze by day-break, and they parted mutually satisfied with each other.

On the following morning, Fong, after a good breakfast, which the bonze's purse enabled him to procure, took an affectionate leave of his wife and children, and set off to keep his promise, like a punctual man as he was. The bonze received him, and conducted him to the top of the machine, where there were several robust bonzes, to whom Fong was introduced. A robe was produced, which he was desired to put on, and with the assistance of the bonzes he did so. They were most assiduous in their attentions to him in tying and buttoning the clothes he was to wear ; and he was exhausting his eloquence in thanks, when he found that on their suddenly drawing one string of the robe, with which all the others were connected, his limbs were effectually confined. A lofty cap, decorated with jewels, was put upon his head, and tied under his chin ; immediately after which latter operation he found he was entirely gagged, and could not open his mouth. He could, therefore, neither move hand nor foot, nor tongue. Being thus effectually rendered helpless, he was immediately taken up in the arms of the bonzes, and carried to a part of the machine whence he could see the immense crowd of people assembled below, but his face

alone was visible to them: then the bonzes bound him to a post, so as to keep him in one position, and left him.

Fong began to suspect some treachery; but his terror and his grief can only be imagined when he heard the old bonze, who had made the bargain with him on the preceding day, begin to preach a sermon to the people, in the course of which he told them that the person they saw on the machine was a nobleman, who had been chosen, from among innumerable aspirants for the same honour, to sacrifice himself to the god Tien Tchu. This nobleman, he said, would, at the seventh hour, throw himself headlong from the top of the machine into the deep and rapid torrent which rolled at the bottom of the hill; and would then be received by the spirits of the flood, and conducted to the gardens of Lao, where he would enjoy everlasting life and happiness.

Fong made a thousand efforts to get loose; and it would have been an evil hour for the old bonze if he had succeeded. The rogues who had brought him thither, and who stood behind him screened by the machine from the view of the people, recommended him to be quiet, promising him consolingly that the sermon of the old bonze should be fulfilled so far as the throwing him headlong into the river. This increased his agony, and his face underwent a thousand fright-

ful contortions, which the people who saw him took for so many proofs of his zeal, and of the earnestness of his devotion.

While this farce was playing the chief mandarin came past. He was a great observer of religious forms; but, as he did not happen to be a disciple of Tien Tchu, and as he had a spite against the priests of this deity, he stopped his retinue to see what was going on.

He listened to the bonze's sermon, and looked at the object of it, in whose rolling eyes and frantic look he thought he discovered something very extraordinary. He asked the bonze what was the name of this devoted nobleman; and the bonze replied that it was against the principles of his religion to disclose his name.

"Well, then," said the mandarin, "let him come down; I will ask him myself."

"Call him down," said the bonze, "and see if he will come."

The mandarin did call him; but Fong did not obey his summons, for the best reason in the world—he was tied hand and foot. He did all he could—he grinned most dreadfully.

Luckily for the poor fellow, that which was said to be the chief mandarin's greatest weakness saved his life. His lordship began to doubt; and, his doubts turning upon the point whether all the bonzes were not great rogues, he sent up some of his own officers to examine into the affair.

They soon discovered the manner in which Fong was bound, and the reason of his silence; and, releasing him, they brought him before the mandarin.

Fong's answers soon disclosed the whole mystery; and the mandarin, who, when he did decide a cause, did it in such a manner as to make an impression, decreed, in the first place, that the twenty purses should be paid to Fong; and, this being done, he directed that all the bonzes concerned in this trick should be immediately thrown from the top of the machine into the river, and recommended to the protection of the spirits of the flood, who, if they were not impostors, would, of course, preserve their lives. This sentence was immediately carried into execution, to the satisfaction of the populace, who, as they expected to see only one man leap into the river, were agreeably disappointed at finding ten jumpers. They praised the equity and sagacity of the chief mandarin to the skies, and went home delighted that their laws and liberties were under the protection of so wise and virtuous a magistrate.

Fong, rejoicing at his escape, and at the acquisition of the purses, slipped away from the crowd of persons who congratulated him, and set off by a near cut towards the city, intending to surprise his wife with the news. He found, however, that the exertions of the day, and his

fright, had so much fatigued him, that some repose was necessary; and he was devoured too by a burning thirst.

On his road he passed a small pleasure-garden, and, looking through a latticed door, he saw a fountain throwing up its sparkling waters beneath the cool shade of a luxuriant tree. As nobody appeared at hand, he entered without ceremony, and, having quenched his thirst in the refreshing stream, he lay down in a thicket, when he soon fell into a deep slumber.

He was awoke after some time by a slight noise, which, upon raising his head, he found was occasioned by the passage near him of a person who was borne in a sedan by two slaves. They put him down near the place of Fong's retreat, which was so completely a concealment, that the position in which he lay prevented him from being seen. He, however, recognised, in the person borne, the devotee who sat upon nails, and who, when he had been a king, pretended to decipher the characters which had been the cause of all his misfortunes.

The slaves having retired, the devotee very coolly got up from his nailed seat, and proceeded to undress for the purpose of bathing; but in doing this he discovered the whole secret of his sanctity, for Fong perceived that the thin linen drawers in which he was clad were lined with a piece of buffalo's hide, which so firmly resisted

the effect of the nails, that he sat as much unhurt as if he had been upon a bed of roses. The rogue, after bathing, dressed himself in a splendid robe, which he produced from his chair; and having taken from the same place a considerable sum of money, raised from the offerings of the pious in the course of the day, he spread it upon the ground, and sat down to count it.

A troop of young girls were now seen, hastening down a walk of the garden in a dance, the measure of which they marked by a song.—They saluted the pious anchorite with all the blandishments of mercenary affection; and Fong soon discovered that they composed the haram of this hypocrite, who retired hither to solace himself after the fatigues of his feigned mortification. He pursued the dance of his female companions with as much alacrity as they, and was soon lost sight of in the flowery thickets of the garden; while Fong, who feared that some unlucky bastinado might be in store for him if he were discovered, crawled from his hiding-place, and, gaining the gate, pursued his road towards the city.

As he wandered along, reflecting upon the hypocrisy of the rogue he had left behind, he could not avoid contrasting his own present with his former condition.

"And if I had been still a monarch," he said,

and smiled, "I should, upon the discovery of this imposture, have indulged in a fit of passion, and ordered his head off; but I thank the gods that, in all my misfortunes, I have at least subdued that weakness—I am no longer a passionate man."

As he uttered this soliloquy he looked up, and beheld the old woman who had sold him the sleeping fair.

"Another old acquaintance!" said he.

The witch, courtesying before him, presented him with the identical treasurer's staff of office upon which she had flown away from him, and said "Will it please you to ride?"

"Oh, yes," replied Fong, smiling; and, taking the staff from her hand, he strode across it. No sooner had he spoken than he felt himself ascending; and, after sailing in the air for a short space, the staff made a descent towards the palace, where it entered an open window of the state chamber, and deposited Fong upon the regal couch. To his utter amazement, he found too that his person had during this flight undergone another change, and that he was now restored to his pristine condition of royalty. His attendants entering, he learned that he had lain in a trance for three days; and, shortly after, the bonze, prostrating himself before the throne, implored his pardon for the delusion he had practised upon him by means of a dream.

"Then we have no wife?" cried the monarch.

"None," replied the bonze.

"And are we a king again?"

"As you have ever been," continued the philosopher; "but, fearing that your impetuosity would cause some formidable evil, I have taken this means of discharging the duty I vowed to your deceased father, and of teaching your majesty a lesson which I hope you will never forget."

"By the bamboo of my late little wife, I never will!" replied the monarch.

He then gave orders that a solemn festival should be proclaimed, at which every house and every garden should be illuminated with coloured lamps and lanterns, in commemoration of these strange events, and in some degree emblematical of his own illuminated pavilion in the gardens of the palace.

The bonze presented the king with a real slave, of beauty equal to hers of whom he had dreamed, and no foul witch interfered to mar his happiness. He sought out the dervis, and, having ascertained that part of the dream which related to this impostor to be correct, he only punished him by confiscating his haram and pleasure-gardens, and taking away his buffalo-skin, which latter *pointed* mark of his displeasure he thought sufficient.

Although he knew that his obligations to the chief mandarin were merely visionary, yet he

had been so thoroughly frightened with the prospect of his jump into the torrent, from which, in his dream, this minister had saved him, that he always treated him with profound respect, and loaded him with honours, to which, notwithstanding his habit of doubting, the virtue and wisdom of the Mandarin fully entitled him.

The remainder of the reign of Ko Fi was prosperous, and extended to an uncommon length, equally honorable to himself and beneficial to his people.

Annually, on the return of the day on which he awoke from his trance, he had the festival which he had ordered on that occasion repeated. The memory of it did not die with him, but it has been perpetuated during the last nine thousand six hundred and one years, and will probably be continued as long as the world exists. Such was the origin of *The Feast of Lanterns*.

"Well, uncle," said Elizabeth, "it is a very pretty story, but I wonder at hearing you say you do not believe it to be true."

"Oh, my love," replied the veteran, "it may be true or it may not; all I can say for it is that it happened a long while ago, and a great way off; and, if any body likes to believe it, I don't know any harm it can do."

Supper was now announced, and the story-telling for this evening was concluded.

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